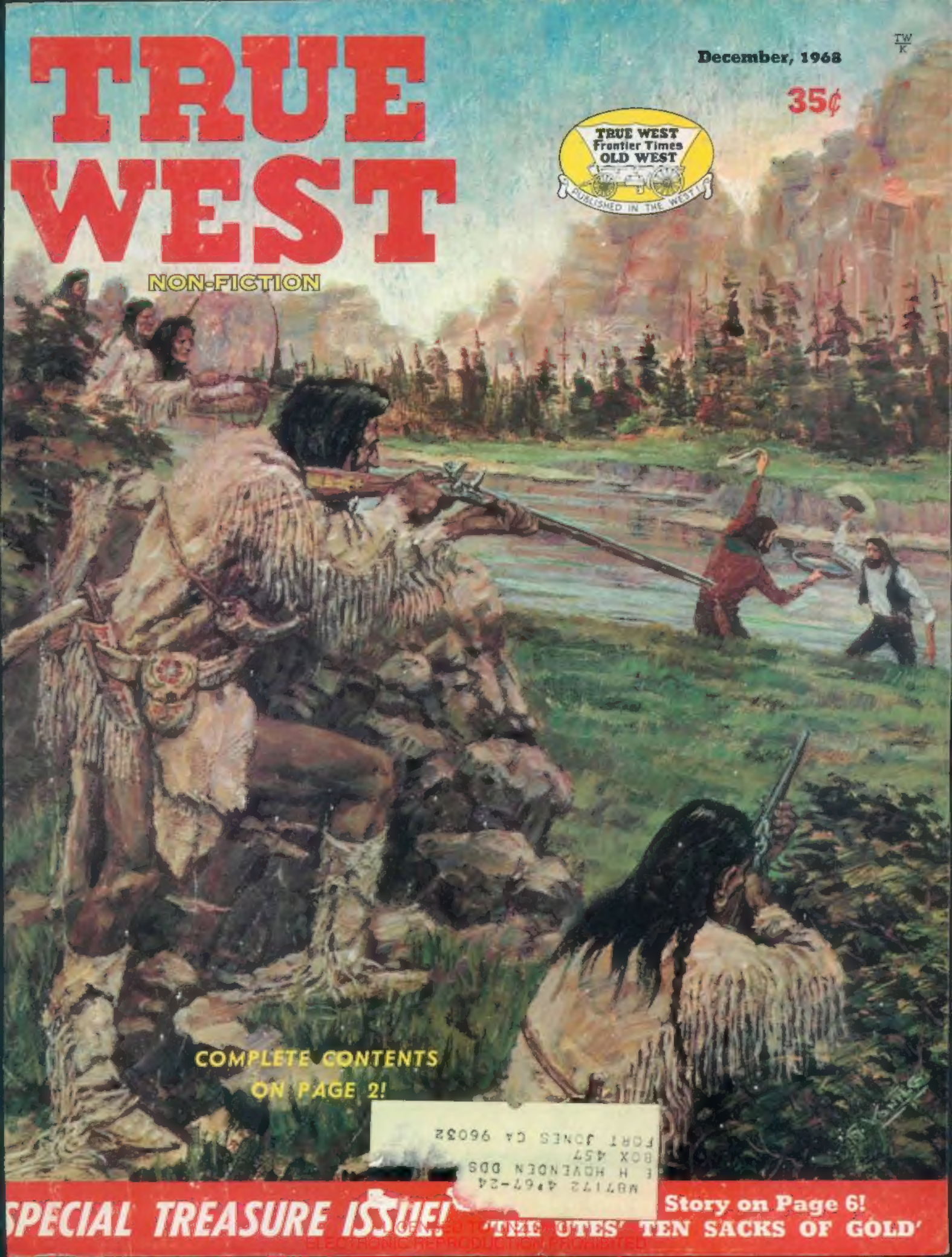
TRUE WEST

NON-FICTION

December, 1968

35¢

TRUE WEST
Frontier Times
OLD WEST
PUBLISHED IN THE WEST



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SPECIAL TREASURE ISSUE!

Story on Page 6!

'THE UTES' TEN SACKS OF GOLD'

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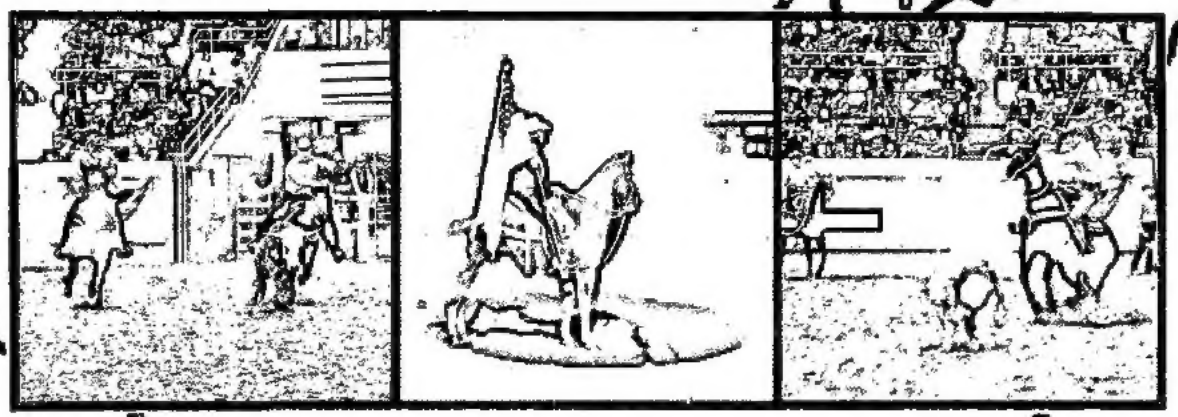

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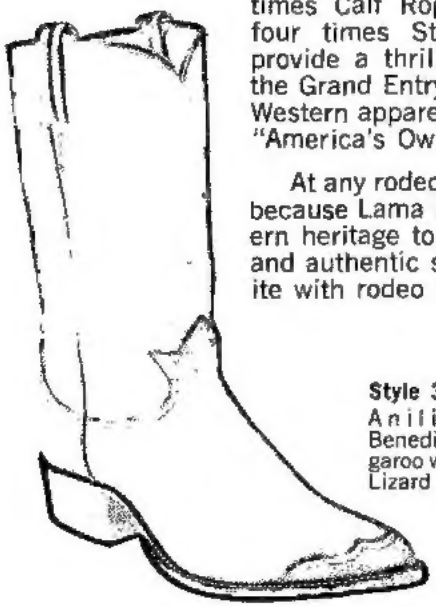

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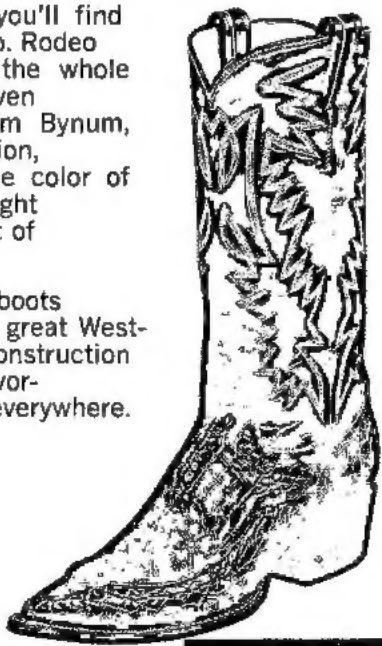

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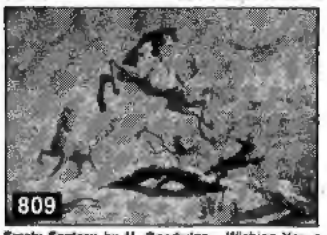

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A JOE SMALL PUBLICATION

November-December, 1968

Volume 16, No. 2

Whole No. 90

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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JOE AUSTELL SMALL, Publisher
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MARY SANDERS, Editorial Assistant
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MARILYN WHITE, Circulation

"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."—Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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Cover: Gary Von Ilg

TRUE WEST is published bi-monthly by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC., P.O. Box 3668, 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Texas 78704. 35c per copy, $4.00 for 12 issues in the United States and Possessions, Canada and Mexico. $5.00 for 12 issues in all other countries. Second-class postage paid at Austin, Texas. Copyright 1968 by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC.

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And A Happy...

IT'S SORT OF RIDICULOUS. Here I am writing a "Merry Christmas!" note to you and it is August 21st! Along with getting too commercial, Christmas also is coming too early. I have about as much Christmas spirit this hot August day as a tick with a bad case of hives!

It isn't that I don't love Christmas—it's just that it's coming too early. In days of the Old West, sometimes Pa wouldn't go out and cut a cedar tree until the afternoon of Christmas Eve and we'd spend that night before a roaring post oak fire, decorating the tree and smelling of the cedar and popping popcorn and it was actually as much fun as Christmas Day itself. I'll never forget the time that Mama was putting some of that new fuzzy stuff we'd never seen before at the foot of the tree so it would look all white and snowy and some trapped air in an oak knot burst through and showered the stuff with fireworks. It nearly set the tree on fire and we had more excitement than we had during the whole remainder of the Christmas season!

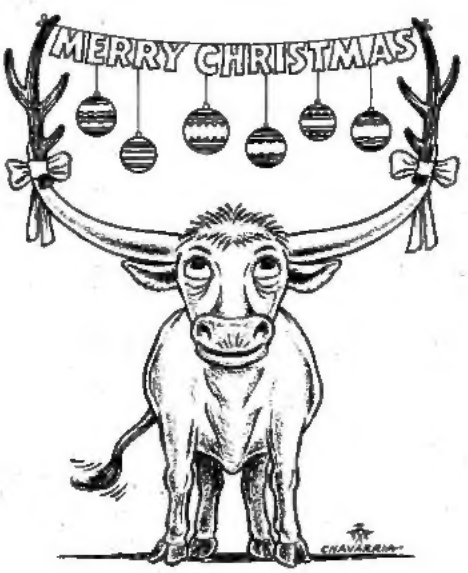
We don't have the same kind of Christmases these days. Of course, we don't have the same kind of *anything*. But I still wonder if it would be as much fun, getting a bunch together, going out in the country and playing like an old-time Christmas. Seems like the old folks enjoyed it as much as the kids in those days.

I still think it is ridiculous having to get a Christmas issue ready for the printer in August! Also, the people who tell us how best to sell our magazines on the newsstands have us dating an issue December and it is actually on the newsstands in October! They say that people want things ahead of time. Looks like we're going to get so far ahead we'll finally roam clean away from any vestige of whatever old-time reality there is left. Our magazines, in particular, could be dated August and come out in December and be just as up-to-date as they will be twenty years from now. I can't see much sense in writing about an event that happened a hundred years ago and making sure that it is dated December when it comes out in October.

Oh well, there are even a few more things in life that I don't understand. We have tried it every way and it seems that dating the issues early makes for a better sale. In that case, maybe this issue should be dated December 1969. AND why don't people send their Christmas cards in August and spend their summer vacations on top a snow-covered mountain in January (the skiers, hunters, etc. do!) and on and on. Why am I trying to analyze people? I don't even know enough about myself to fill a half column!

IMPORTANT, by golly! If you didn't read the first of a series of timber country stories which began in the October issue, for gosh sakes go back and don't miss it. "The Love of Six-Toed Pete" is the second in this series. Dad Ingles and Richard Summers co-authored it. Dad Ingles was to the early logging days what Jesse James Benton was to the cattle country. Remember "Cow By the Tail"? We got more comment on that story I believe than any we have ever run!

By the way, we have had some letters from readers wanting to know how we look and wouldn't we run pictures of the whole staff in some issue. Well, we've done just that—the staff has grown to the point to where it would be a little cumbersome to run everybody big enough to where you could tell much about them, so since a composite picture of anything is so popular these days, we are running a composite of the office force, with a few ornaments hung on and a VERY Merry Christmas!—Hosstail.



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Truly Western

Spicer Family Massacre

Gentlemen:

In your October 1967 TRUE WEST you ran a story about the massacre of the Spicer family in 1897 by five young Indians near the town of Winona, North Dakota. An alarm was sent out and the five were picked up. Three of them were hanged and one of them was believed killed by drinking poisoned whiskey. Black Hawk's death was not described.

As he was the only one not accounted for, you might be interested in a statement made to me some years ago by William H. Nesbitt of McLaughlin, South Dakota who was living at La-Grace, North Dakota at the time of the killing and who, as a Deputy U. S. Marshal at that time. was detailed to bring Black Hawk back if possible. In company with a deputy sheriff, he trailed Black Hawk for two days and on the morning of the third day they spotted his horse tied in front of a nester's shack. Creeping up to the window, they saw the man sitting in a chair, his arms folded over the back and his head on his arms as if asleep. A very frightened woman was doing some cooking. When the officers opened the door and stepped inside, Black Hawk sprang to his feet and pulled his gun, but before he could pull the trigger he died of a heart attack. The woman was terrified and told how he had pushed his way into the house at gunpoint a short while before the officers arrived, and ordered her to get him something to eat. That was what she was trying to do when the officers arrived. The woman's husband had gone out on the range that morning to check his stock, and probably Black Hawk had watched him leave before making his way to the house. This is the story of the death of Black Hawk, the fifth Indian, as told to me by William H. Nesbitt, the man the Indians knew as William-One-Tongue, because he never lied to them.—G. M. Howell, Lambert, Montana 59243

Charley Harrison

Dear Joe:

In the first paragraph of the story on Charley Harrison in the January-February issue of TRUE WEST, the author makes an error which I have seen time and again. Almost every writer who has told the tale of Harrison, including William MacLeod Raine, who, besides being a serious student of Western gunsmoke history, was a Denver resident and had known Masterson personally and should have known better, has quoted Bat with regard to Harrison's six-gun ability. Masterson's remarks concerning Charley Harrison appeared in one of the series of pieces he did for *Human Life* in 1907. Bat made it clear that he had witnessed a demonstration of Harrison's skill: "He was . . . the most expert man I ever saw with a pistol. He could shoot faster and straighter when shooting at a target than any man I ever knew." And yet, Charley Harrison, the gunfighting gambler of Denver and Confederate officer, was killed in May 1863 by Osage Indians. In May 1863 William B. Masterson was a nine-year-old boy in Illinois. "Thirty-five years ago," wrote Bat in 1907, "Charley Harrison was one of the best-known men west of the Missouri River." That would be in 1872. The confusion results from the fact that there were two Charley Harrisons, both professional gamblers and both skilled gunmen. The Charley Harrison Masterson saw in action was killed in a gunfight with Jim Levy in Cheyenne in March 1877.—Robert DeArment, 2565 Ivy Place, Toledo, Ohio 43613

Johnny Matheson and Bob Kenyon

Dear Sir:

Being from Montana myself (I lived at Stanford for more than sixty years), I was much interested in the August 1967 issue.

When I came to Stanford from Great Falls as a bride, Johnny Matheson, who was in town with his freight team, told my husband, "Another woman to take in washing." Although my husband hauled wool to Great Falls with a freight team, he had a good cattle ranch so I never did have "to take in washing."

I also knew Bob Kenyon very well—almost too well. One year when my husband, "Kid Amby," was judging the rodeo at the fair in Great Falls, we stayed at the Rainbow Hotel. Old Bob had a string of pack mules at the fair and every time he'd see me at the Rainbow Hotel, he'd yell clear across the lobby, "How is my old friend Mis Cheney?" much to my embarrassment and to the amusement of other guests, for he never bothered to clean up or shave.

Before that time he rode as a herder for the Highwood Cattle Association during the summers on the Forest Reserve. At that time, my son-in-law was a school superintendent at the little town of Highwood. Our ranch was twelve miles south of Geyser, twelve miles west of Stanford, and during the summer we often took a picnic lunch and going through Geyser and the Highwood Gap would meet my daughter and her husband to

(Continued on page 72)

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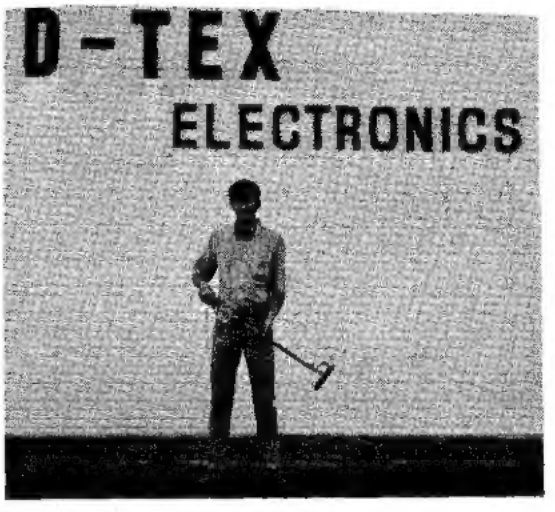

DOYLE WILLIAMS

Doyle Williams who showed an outstanding performance in the world championship treasure hunt by coming in third place using his year old D-Tex has scored again.

At the Prospector's Club International Permian Basin Treasure Hunt he surprised hundreds of other contestants by finishing up as First Place winner. Doyle says—"All it takes is a D-TEX and lots of hard work." Doyle is 17 years old, from Okemah, Oklahoma and his intent in treasure hunting is to pay his way through college. The way he is going we are certain he will make it.

JOHN ROSEBAUM

MIDWEST HISTORICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY TREASURE HUNT

John Rosebaum, who won First place in Midwest Historical Society's annual Treasure Hunt, with his month old D-TEX DELUX, is new at the Treasure Hunting business as historical research is his hobby. John has had the opportunity to try most of the metal detectors made, but as far as he is concerned, D-TEX is the only detector he would recommend. He also says it is the easiest detector to tune and the sensitivity and accuracy characteristics are way ahead of any other detector made at this time.

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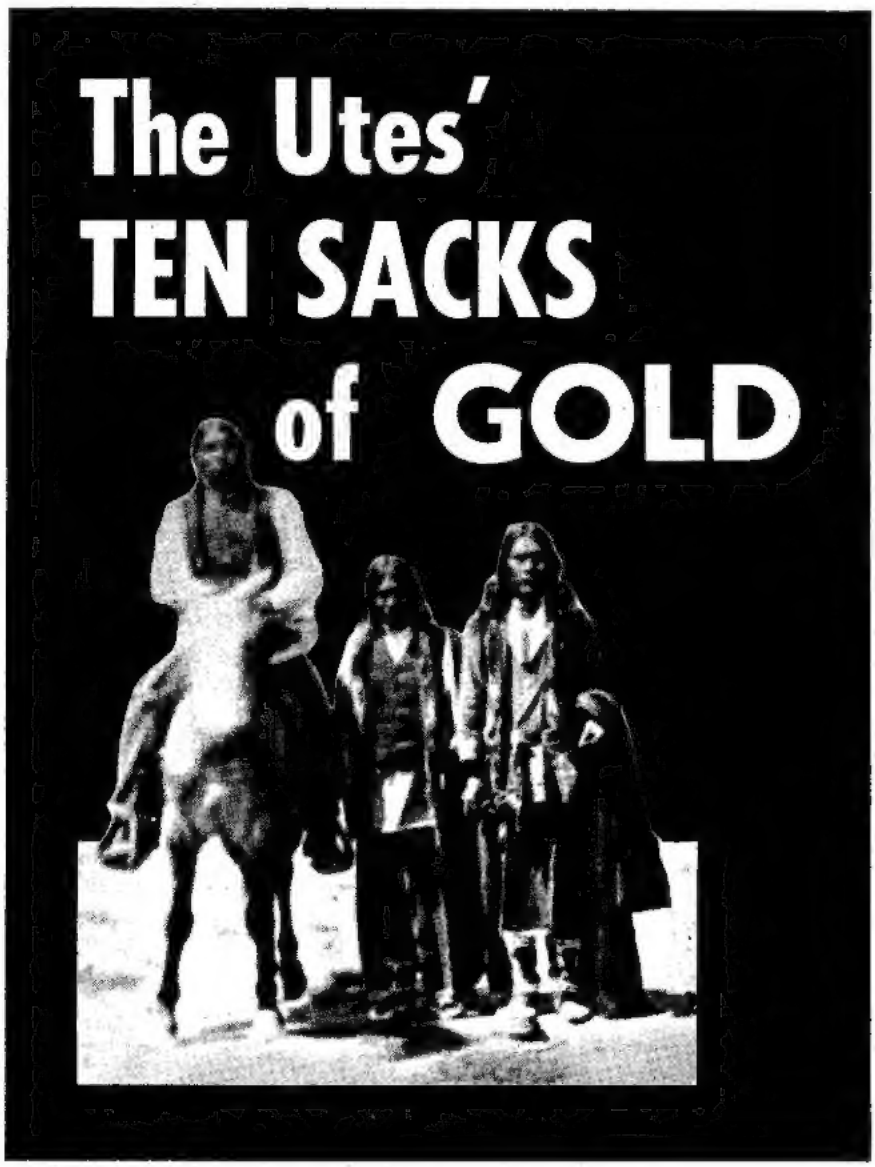
Rarely have two versions of the same treasure story jibed so well as these. When the white man and the red man tell it alike, there must be something to it!

The Utes' TEN SACKS of GOLD



SOMEWHERE near the confluence of the Piedra River and Stollsteimer Creek, south of the famous Chimney Rocks on Highway 160 in southwestern Colorado, is a little spot of ground containing the richest concentration of gold in all of the San Juan Basin. There are five muleloads of bullion in that little spot which at the current value of gold would be worth between $350,000 and $400,000—a mighty tidy little sum of cash in any man's country at any time.

The Ute Indians dumped that gold there; it was part of the price which they exacted from five white men for a few pieces of venison and some bread stolen from an Indian camp. The balance of the price the Utes took was the lives of four of the white men and their entire outfit of horses, mules, and camp. One of the men escaped. Had he been included in the massacre, there would have been no one to tell the white man's side of the events and corroborate the accounts of the tragic incident as told by several different old Ute warriors many, many years later. The Utes told their story to Mexican friends first, and later to a few select white men with whom they had become friendly in the twilight of their lives. The writer was one of these select few.

Sometime in October 1851 or 1852, a group of five white men, with saddle horses and seven pack mules, crossed the Colorado River at the present location of Moab, Utah, and began their long trip across the San Juan country of southwestern Colorado. The men were on their way from the goldfields of California to Taos or Santa Fe, New Mexico, where they could get on the Santa Fe Trail and make the rest of their trip back to the States in company with freighters returning east.

Five of the seven mules were loaded with gold bullion—two sacks to each mule. How these five men had secured so much gold, and why they were transporting it across country themselves through a region where there were no main trails to travel, remains a considerable mystery. Circumstances strongly indicate that they had not come by the gold legitimately and had purposely chosen this remote route the better to avoid detection. But how they came by the gold is less important than the fact that they had it.

All that is known about their journey prior to their crossing the Colorado River in southeastern Utah that October day was the brief remark made by the lone survivor years later that they had come in a circuitous way from California; but after the party had crossed the river they were in Ute territory and sharp Indian eyes kept watch on this curious party of strangers as they plodded along. Many of the Indians had never seen a white man before, and these roughly-dressed, long-haired heavily-bearded specimens of humanity were objects of intense interest to them. One man in the group, however, was outstanding—he had no whiskers. He had hair on his head like the others but no whiskers on his face. The Indians were so intrigued by this curious fact that they later referred to him as "Naked Face." The importance of this allusion will be apparent later.

From the crossing of the Colorado on into the San Juan country the party of white men followed, roughly, the route traveled by Father Escalante and his party some seventy-five years before, when that intrepid priest was looking for a northern trail from Santa Fe to the missions in California. It is doubtful that these white adventurers had any knowledge of Escalante and his expedition. They were simply traveling toward a specific goal, and took the easiest and most logical route to get there.

FROM THE Colorado they swung out in a southeastward course in a sort of arc around the base of the high mountains—the La Sals, the La Platas, and the San Juans—and traveled along the geological trough between the mountains and the lower, sedimentary tablelands of Mesa Verde, where the famous national park of that name is located.

The party crossed the Rio de las Animas a little way below the present site

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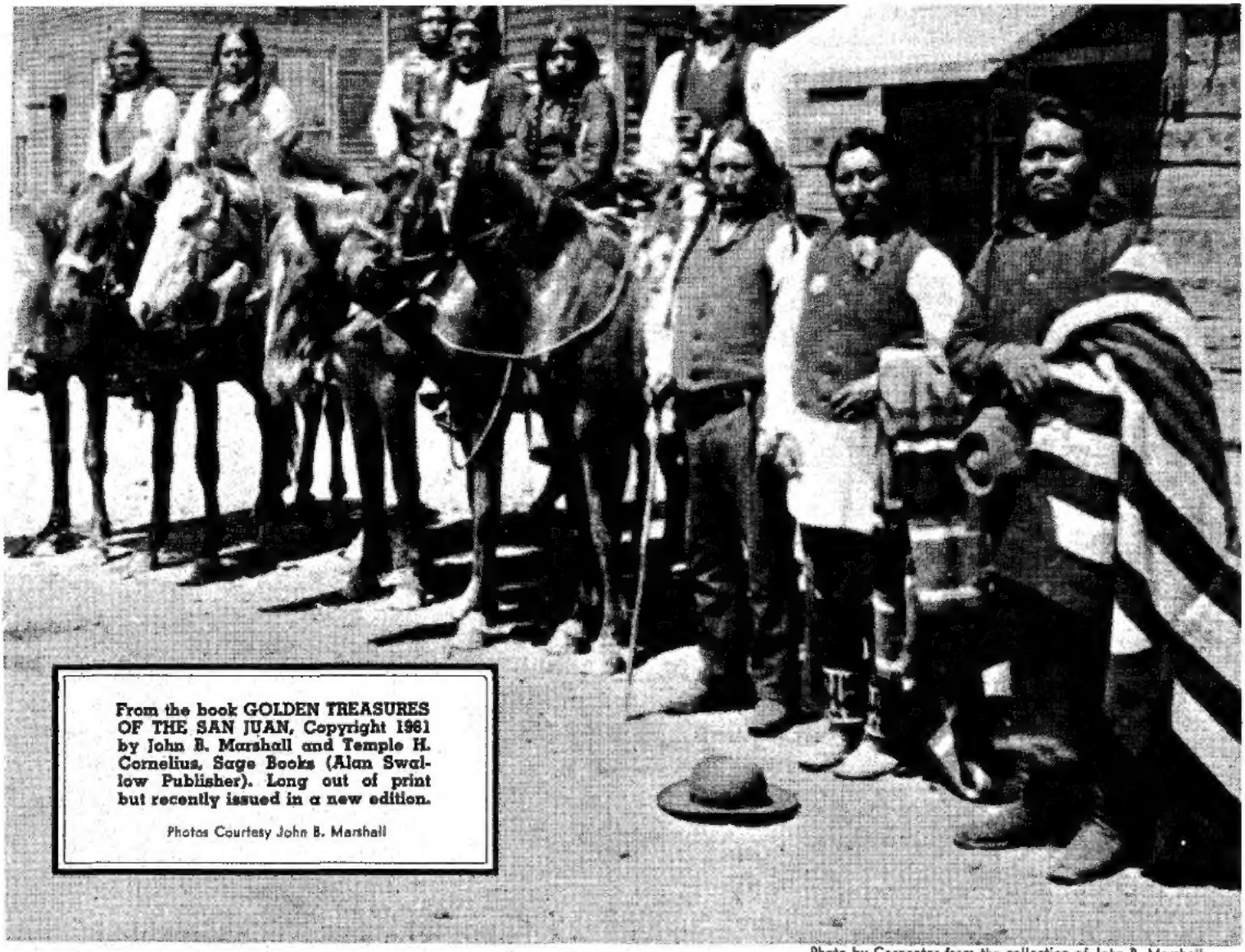

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Photos Courtesy John B. Marshall

Photo by Carpenter from the collection of John B. Marshall

Ute Indians at Ignacio, 1890.

of Durango, and from there for some unaccountable reason they headed almost due east across Florida Mesa and the valley of the Pine River for a notch in range of low, rolling hills now known as the Ignacio Mountains. Their logical course would have been to have swung more to the southeast across less rugged country, to encounter the San Juan River near the present community of Allison. What capricious quirk of fate influenced them to get off their course and go to the Ignacio Mountains will never be known. They made a bad mistake.

The Ignacio Mountains are really not mountains at all, but a long, high ridge with a series of promontories and notches along its length and little creeks, valleys, and canyons on its slopes which drain into the Pine River on the west and the Piedra on the east. It is the divide between the two watersheds.

This was a beautiful country, covered with a magnificent stand of western yellow pine, scrub oak, and native berries. It was a land of abundant grass and abundant game in the autumn of the year as the elk and the deer drifted down from the high mountains immediately north. Open parks, beautiful little valleys along the creeks, and plenty of wood and water made this a favorite camping place and hunting ground for the Utes in the fall.

The main or central camp of the Ute band who claimed this land as their home was in the valley on upper Fossett Creek on the Piedra slope, where in later years Mike Pargin had a cattle ranch. Individual families or groups of two or three families preferred to camp out to themselves, setting up their tepees near each other in some park or little valley.

This was the setup on the fateful October afternoon when the party of white men crossed the notch in the divide and suddenly rode smack into an Indian camp in the edge of the timber in a beautiful valley at the head of a creek which drained east into the Piedra. The white men were as surprised at this encounter as the Ute squaws and papooses in the camp were, but they were not nearly so frightened.

AT SIGHT of those rough-appearing, bewhiskered strangers the squaws let out a yell and with their kids fled into hiding in the brush and timber. Page Wright, a venerable Ute who lived to a mighty old age on his allotment on Pine River below the town of Ignacio, was one of the tiny Indian tots in this group. He was not over five years old at the time but the terror of the occasion made such a lasting impression on his memory that he never forgot it. He recounted the incident with the utmost clarity to the writer on several different occasions. There were no Indian men in the camp. They were out hunting.

The white men had no intention of doing any harm either to the squaws or to the camp. In fact they were so surprised at encountering a camp and live Indians that, temporarily, they had no intentions, period. These were the first

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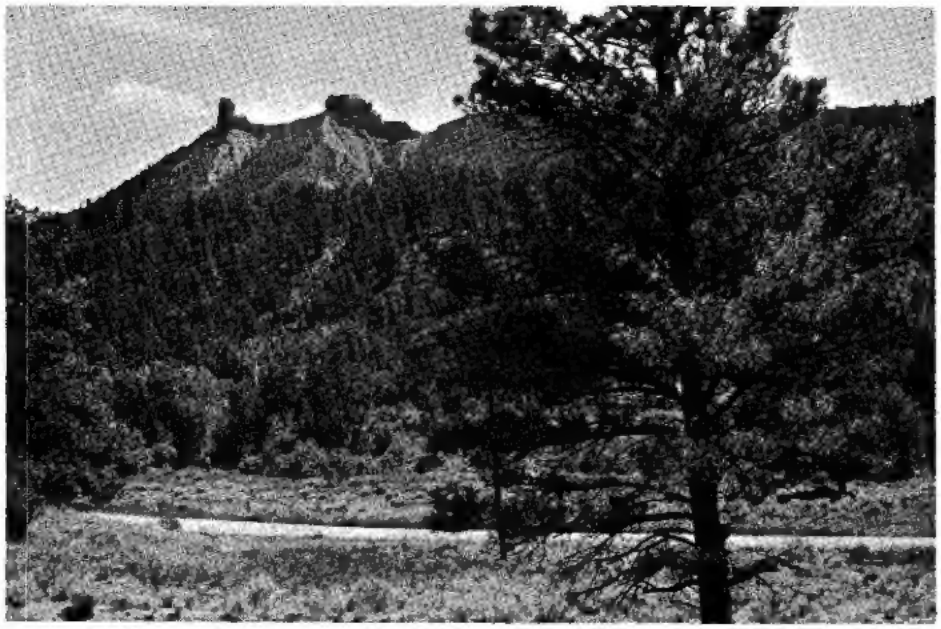

Chimney Rock, near Pagosa Springs, stands outlined against the sky.

Indians they had actually seen in the entire trip from the Colorado, and they were not mentally conditioned for the encounter. Indians had observed them all along the line, but they had not seen a single redskin.

After a few minutes of hesitancy, the white men recovered from their shock and realized the precariousness of their position. The quickest way out of the dilemma was to bypass the camp and continue on their way, and had they done that perhaps they would not have been molested. But as they went by the small group of tepees the sight of lots of fresh meat hung out to dry, and the delicious aroma of meat left cooking on the fire, was too great a temptation for the hungry men to resist. They had been living on short rations for several days, had been riding constantly since they crossed the Colorado, and had seen no game to kill en route.

Why not take some of the food along with them? The Indians surely should not resent such a little thing as the theft of some grub. Naked Face and one of the other fellows dismounted while the other three men went on with the pack stock. It only took a few minutes to collect what food the men wanted, but it was a nervous few minutes, and when Naked Face started to mount his horse the animal became frightened and in his prancing about, knocked one of the tepees over.

The two men attached no importance to this seemingly trivial incident. What did an upset tepee amount to, anyway? It could be set up again in a few minutes and no harm done, at least that is what the men thought. The rest of their party was already going out of sight around a bend in the valley and these fellows were in a hurry to overtake them. They rode away from the camp without so much as a backward glance. They might have been much less carefree had they known what had happened to that upset tepee and what tragic consequences were to follow in a few hours. The tepee had fallen across a campfire and the whole Indian camp was burning up as a result!

The white men continued on their way down a long draw and came out about dusk on the west bank of the Piedra River at some point opposite the mouth of the Stollsteimer. This long draw must have been either Turkey Creek, Skull Canyon, or Goose Creek because those are the three tributaries emptying into the Piedra opposite the Stollsteimer. It was while the party was traveling down the long draw that afternoon that Naked Face saw the Chimney Rocks and remembered them so well that he easily recognized them again some forty years later.

Whether the party camped that night on the east bank of the river or on the west bank, above or below the confluence of the Stollsteimer, and whether the mouth of that erratic little stream is in the same location today as it was then, has never been definitely established. Wherever the camp may have been, adjacent to it was a bank of some sort, and somewhere in the immediate vicinity, perhaps on this same bank, was a shallow, narrow ravine—a short one. These physical features are not very outstanding landmarks in that locality. There are many such banks and ravines in the area.

The white men were up early the next morning, and shortly after daylight Naked Face was driving the saddle horses and pack mules up to the camp to be caught and saddled, when the Utes suddenly attacked from behind the bank. Naked Face was about 200 yards from the camp when he heard the Indian war-whoop and saw the redskins shoot down his four companions and charge into camp. He did the only sensible thing left for him to do. He ran for cover and in doing so he ran out of the story for almost forty years.

WHAT HAPPENED to the camp outfit, the livestock, or to the gold, Naked Face never knew, other than the Utes had taken possession of it. He was so concerned in making his escape that he never had an opportunity to look back. What became of the gold, the camp outfit, and the pack stock was told many years later by several of the Utes themselves—old warriors who had participated in the massacre and had a part in the disposal of the stuff. Theirs was "first-hand" information.

Several of the old boys gave their accounts of the massacre on different occasions and to different men; and those accounts all agree remarkably well with each other. Among them were Old Washington, Tallian, Gergorio, Pelon, and Narizon, all survivors of the white man's conquest of their homeland—and all of them bitter with hatred of the whites. Page Wright, while not a participant in the raid, remembered a great deal about it from the stories he heard in his early childhood and youth; and he knew where the gold was buried but, like the other old Indians, he would never tell.

The Utes were so resentful of the Americans after the latter took over the San Juan country (about twenty years subsequent to the massacre on the Piedra), that they would not associate with them any more than circumstances compelled, and they certainly confided no secrets to them.

However, the Indians did become friendly with the Mexicans of the region. The latter had taken homesteads along the creeks in the outlying areas where they had built modest houses as headquarters for their livestock operations—the raising of sheep, goats, and some cattle. They and the Utes got along. By the early 1880s the Indians had told their story of the white men and the buried gold to enough of the early Mexican settlers of the region, such as Juan Lucero who lived down on the Pine River, Onesimo Archuleta on the Piedra, and Pedro Martinez on Cat Creek above Pagosa Junction, that the yarn was widely known among the Spanish people and had become an integral part of the folklore of the region.

In fact it had become so generally known among the early-day Mexican residents that they had confused this yarn with the legend about a party of Frenchmen who had been in the San Juan Basin hunting gold a century before and had given the name of "La Francees" to Stollsteimer Creek. Even to this day the region about the mouth of that creek is still known as La Francees among the local Mexicans.

But the old Utes steadfastly refused to show their Mexican friends exactly where the gold was buried or to give out any information which would be of any help in determining the precise spot. To do so, they staunchly maintained, would bring a violent death to the Indian who disclosed such information. And no Ute would ever uncover that gold. No curse, however, was attached to revealing the general area in which the treasure was buried, or to recounting the circumstances of the event.

Even though the story of the buried gold at the mouth of the Stollsteimer was quite widely known and was given absolute credence among the Mexican population, few Anglo settlers knew anything

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about it, and those few took no interest in it. The Anglos had nothing in common with the Utes but hatred, and almost no social or economic contact with the Mexicans, so the story did not circulate among them very much.

This ignorance of the legend may have spoiled a wonderful opportunity which some white men later had of finding the lost treasure. Ignorance can be a costly thing!

IT WAS not until after the turn of the twentieth century that the old Utes began to get over their bitter hatred of Americans enough to tell them some past history of their tribe. The massacre and the hiding of the gold on the banks of the Piedra were fifty years in the past by that time, and many of the Indians who had participated in that encounter had gone to their Happy Hunting Ground.

Among the few who were still alive to give a first-hand account of the event was Old Washington. With signs and a mixture of Spanish and Ute expressions, he told the story vividly, unhesitatingly, sincerely, and with remarkable clarity.

"One time, many years ago," he always began his narrative, and would usually repeat the phrase as a sort of emphasis on the length of time, "five white men with horses came from *más alla*," indicating with a nod of his head and a pursing of his lips, a westerly direction. "These were shaggy-looking men like a buffalo with long black hair on their heads and faces—all except one. This one had light hair on his head and no hair on his face, which made him appear so different from the others.

"We [the Utes] were camped back in the hills over there," pointing with his hand to the Ignacio Mountains. "It was in the *otoño* (autumn) when the days were short and the sun went to bed early. Most all of the Indians lived close together in one big camp in Vallecito de los Pinos [the valley on upper Fosset Creek] but some families had their own camps in other little parks away from our main camp. There were lots of acorns, lots of piñon nuts, and lots of fat game that year, and we were busy hunting and getting our food supply for the winter.

"These five white men suddenly rode up to one of these outlying camps. Only the women and children were in the camp at the time. The men were all out hunting. When the squaws and the papooses saw those fierce-appearing white men they were terribly scared, and ran away into the brush to hide. Page Wright and his mother lived in that camp. Page was very small then. Those white men did a very bad thing, they stopped there long enough to take some food, and then they set that Indian camp on fire, and it all burned up. Foolish white men, to do an evil thing like that to a camp where there were only women and children—no Indian men to fight back. Why would they be so bad?

"Had those men only taken some food, the Indians would not have minded and we would not have bothered them because we had plenty of food at that time, but when they set the camp on fire, that made all the Indians mad. One of those squaws came to the main camp and reported what had happened.

Ute mother and child, 1869.

"It was almost dark by the time the Indian men got together and went to the place of the burned tepees. We found the horse tracks of the white men and followed them far enough to be sure they had gone down the canyon to the big river [Piedra] to make camp, but it was too dark for us to do anything more then.

"We built a big fire and had a war dance that night, and had a war council and planned to follow the men early the next morning, make a surprise attack on them, and kill them but not kill or cripple their horses and mules if we could help it. We wanted their livestock and the saddles, and whatever else of their camp outfit we could use.

"When the morning star came up we started after those white men. We located their camp easy enough, and crept along behind a bank until we were right up close to them—about from here to there," indicating by a gesture of his hand a large rock a hundred feet away. "Foolish white men!" Old Washington chuckled with glee. "They were not on guard and did not know we were there. They were awake but their heads were asleep. It was just before sunup. Four of the men were at the camp—all of them had lots of black whiskers all over their faces—but the other man was about 200 yards away. He was driving the horses up to the camp. It seemed so strange that this man had no whiskers. He was naked-faced!

"We did not want to injure any of the horses, so we decided to attack the the men in the camp before the livestock came any nearer. We charged toward them from the bank, yelling and shooting as we went. Those white men didn't have a chance to grab their guns and fire a single shot at us. We killed them before they had time to do anything.

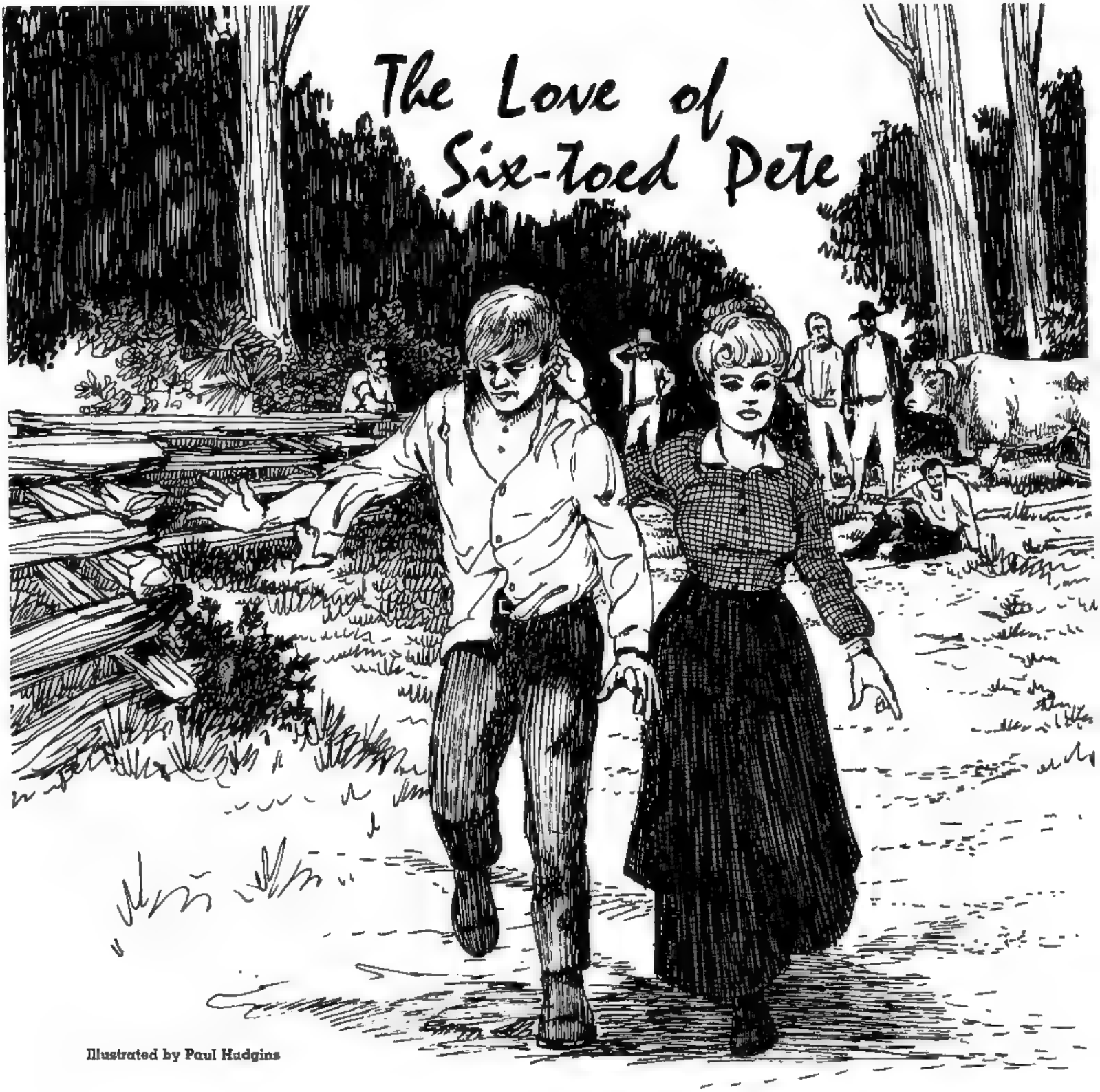
"The naked faced man got away. I was watching him, and when he saw us attack his *compañeros*, he turned and ran away. He ran behind some brush and we did not see him any more. We did not try to follow him because the horses and mules had become excited with all the shooting and were running away, too, and we wanted them more than we did the naked-faced man. So we let him go and rounded up the horses.

"We didn't find anything in the white men's camp that had been stolen from the Indian camp the day before except some food—meat and bread—so the white men had not burned the camp to cover up some thievery, but had done it just to be mean. The white people could be so mean!

"We took everything except some gold they had. There were ten sacks of it. Why were they so crazy about gold? The sacks were not very big but they were heavy. We didn't want it, so we carried it over to a little ravine about a hundred feet away and dropped it, in its sacks,

(Continued on page 48)

The Love of Six-Toed Pete



Illustrated by Paul Hudgins

By RENO "DAD" INGLES

Edited by RICHARD SUMMERS

Photos Courtesy D. L. Ingles

Pete was advised, "You've got to treat a woman like an ox!" Now, Lord knows Pete was good with an ox-team, but that knowledge didn't do him a durn bit of good with his little gal . . .

SIX-TOED PETE was a character that practically everybody liked except old man Carson's nephew, Al Carson. Probably everybody mostly liked him because he was good for a laugh almost any hour of the day or night, and always took the laugh in the right spirit, grinning and not cussing.

The trouble between Six-Toed Pete and Albert Carson was about five-foot five inches tall, with hazel eyes and lots of brown hair and bosom, about eighteen years old, who wore skirts and helped Mrs. Carson with the kitchen chores.

The very first night she come to work

in the kitchen of the big house, which had a big living room and a fireplace that would hold four-foot logs, and the great kitchen downstairs, and a couple of bedrooms, and a big dormitory room upstairs that held upward of forty of us boys at times, they put her to bed in a cubby-hole of a room downstairs that Six-Toed Pete had been using.

Everybody was onto the joke except the girl herself and Six-Toed, who come in very late from bedding down his oxen after a long haul that day from the timber. Kitty Loomis was the girl's name. Tired, she had gone to bed early, soon as she got through washing the dishes, but none of us boys had gone to bed yet. Some of the wagon drivers was still drifting in. We got in at any hour up to twelve or one o'clock, depending on how long our haul was. If you had to make a forty-mile haul, you started your day at six o'clock, loading up, already with breakfast inside you; and your day ended whenever you got in, 'lowed your animals to cool off, then curried them down or washed them off by swimming them around in the pond awhile, bedded them down with grain, and got to bed. Ten-mile haul, you got in early. Forty-mile haul and no telling when you got in. Mostly you was tired enough; you had your long drag off the whiskey bottle you had hid in the rafters, downed a big meal, and turned in right afterward unless there was a dance going on.

Well, this night nobody turned in. We set around and gassed and chewed the fat and waited for Six-Toed Pete to finish his chores and turn in.

About twelve o'clock he says goodnight to us, walks into his bedroom, and closes the door. We could hear him bumping around in there without bothering to light a candle or lamp. He goes over to the bed and pulls back the covers and sticks his hands down.

Kitty Loomis screams like an Indian, and Six-Toed Pete comes bounding out of there like an antelope with the hives, dressed only in his drawers, which was the customary nightclothes. We couldn't get over laughing all the next day.

But it had a different effect on Pete. Right away he took a shine to that girl that was something to behold. Any time he was around where she was, he would just set staring, his eyes walking right around where she walked, unless she chanced to look at him, and then his eyes run away in all directions but hers.

Six-Toed Pete just wasn't the talkative type. He was a big feller, stood about six foot, 190 pounds, kind of hooked nose and drawed-in lips, eyes deep-set and squinty. He could talk plenty to them yoke of oxen he drove as a logging team, bringing in the logs to the mill. You could hear him half a mile off bawling at them like the old bull puncher he was. "Haw, Jerry," "Gee around there, Duke, you ol' blankety, blankety, blankety s.o.b." "Whatsa matter, Jerry, you lazy this morning? Where'd you spend last night, you old blankety, blankety, blank, blank?"

But around females of any age, old or young, even 300-pound Mrs. Carson, who was a mother to every boy on the place, he'd get his tongue all twisted up into a knot, and paw around like a dog, duck his head and squirm his feet around, and go *urk, urk,* like he was gargling in his throat 'stead of making words.

All the boys was pretty much for Six-Toed Pete as against Al Carson, and even went so far as to rig up his first date with pink-cheeked Kitty Loomis, who made a face at first about it, but was persuaded by namely me to be kind-hearted to Six-Toed Pete and let him squire her to a dance at the Benton Ranch.

I'm sure none of us could have guessed how things was going to come out—the bullfight and then that mud battle and finally how the affair between Six-Toed Pete and Kitty Loomis was to end.

THE CARSON BROTHERS' mill, eight miles from Greenville, Washington County, Oregon, was the only one in that region at the time, except they also had a sash and door factory sixteen miles away. Mostly the mill worked small timber that was close by, hauled in by ox teams a log at a time, or floated down Dairy Creek. The mill owned the oxen and hired the loggers and leased the timber land, buying stumpage as low as ten to fifty cents a thousand. Everything was relative, of course, for I've delivered one-by-six inch fenceboards forty miles for eight dollars a thousand, and what we call number three common nowadays, we didn't even bother to deliver but sold it right there at the mill, come and get it and load it yourself, for a dollar a thousand. While I was at the mill I was paid up to a top of a dollar and a half a day, as foreman of the teamsters, but on the other hand you could buy a fifty-pound sack of flour for sixty cents, or a quart of Seagram's in white square bottles at sixty cents a quart, and Mr. Carson furnished me and a few others, that he wanted special to stay on, with two quarts a week free above wages. You could buy a gallon of local wine for fifty cents. Sure, I drank, started when I was fourteen. Everybody did in them days, never on the job but a good slug to get going in the morning and a couple of slugs when you come off the job at night.

The Carson Mill did everything, even including delivering the lumber. Bought it from close around, cut it, hauled it, milled it, dried it, and delivered it as finished lumber, mostly to farmers within a radius of thirty to forty miles. Some of it was sent to the sash and door plant to make windows and doors. Mostly our business was with farmers to build their houses and barns and fence, though we sold some to factories.

It wasn't like being in the big timber, which was what I wanted most when I was a kid, but it was next best; so soon after Mrs. Washburn died, I jumped at the chance to go to work at the mill for seventy-five cents a day, out of which we paid board and room. After I was there a week, and they learned what a hand I was with cattle, they turned over the three cows on the place to me, and a horse to go fetch them with, and for this service of milking those three cows and taking care of the milk and making the butter and cheese, I received another fifty cents a day, which made me one of the highest paid hands on the place. About a little over a year afterward I was graduated from my first job of cleaning up the mill and cutting slats to stick between lumber so that it would dry and cure without warping and sticking, to driving a delivery wagon, and about a year later to foreman on deliveries, with my own wagon in addition to checking on the others.

They was a pretty big establishment to carry on all this business—the mill itself with the steam plant for power and the boilers and tall smokestack, the big house or dormitory, the Carsons' house, and all sorts of barns and pastures for horses and cattle, along with cleared acreage for growing hay and grain for all the stock requirements. As I mentioned before, upwards of forty-fifty men was employed at all times at the mill, with the single men staying at the dormitory and the married men going home at night. Mostly they was farmers and homesteaders, nice homefolk lads between sixteen to twenty among the single men, with the married ones older. Mostly good-spirited and friendly, with only a fight or quarrel in a long while, usually

Carson sawmill near Banks, Oregon.

when one of the boys had imbibed too freely or where women was concerned.

One special reason why I wanted that job so bad was that Lydz Anderson lived within two miles of Buxton, and it was at Buxton where we put on the plays and I went to many dances and usually we went to church on Sundays with our lady friends as one form of recreation. What Brother Garigus, Brother Force, or Brother Han had to say made very little dent in our craniums because we was so busy teasing the girls we'd brought. These ministers was the travel-around type, visiting several churches each Sunday at different times, and changing about every few months to a year, I guess so the congregation wouldn't get to know their spiels too well.

They was a hall in Buxton where sometimes people had dances, or they had them at their own homes, and several of us was great hands to go to every dance on record, dance all night, come in about sun-up, eat breakfast, and go on the road without a wink of sleep, dozing most of the day as we drove. Sometimes as many as three-four dances a week. Some of the boys, among them Six-Toed Pete, was too bashful for that pursuit.

We didn't have many other forms of recreation, but didn't seem to miss them because we was generally too busy. We didn't read none. Come in and if it was still daylight, horsed and wrestled and boxed and played leapfrog around the yard while our teams cooled off, and then went to take care of them before we had dinner, and early to bed.

Don't remember that we ever made much about Thanksgiving, hardly heard of it, but we always had a Christmas tree, and New Year's we always put our slippers on the stove for old Belle Slicker, Santa Claus's wife, to fill with nuts and candy. Fourth of July everybody would pile into wagons and drive sixteen-miles to Forest Grove or Hillsborough for a Fourth celebration, with always home-baked bread and lots of dairy butter and all the fried chicken you could eat. We didn't have so many firecrackers, but patronized the concessions. Mostly I remember a little graphonola run by turning a crank. You hooked earphones to your ears and listened at a cost of ten cents.

WHEN I first come to the Carson Brothers Mill, with all my clothes wrapped in a bundle on a stick, I took a liking right off to Chum Fowler and Six-Toed Pete.

Chum Fowler was very pink-cheeked, with light complexion, blue eyes and blond hair. Didn't look so big, but had a chest on him. Why I liked him was that he'd been a logger in the big timber around Ranier for more than a year, and had only come back here because his mother was sick and his pa wanted him near at hand. Of course I'd always wanted to be a faller in the big timber and we used to talk about it for hours. He aimed to go back when he could and said he'd take me with him, but now I was too young. Said they paid a dollar and a half to two dollars a day and it was exciting and interesting work, whether you was a logger or raftsman.

And he told me about how, every once in so often, when an engine broke down or the boss was feeling good, off they'd skedaddle to Portland or Astoria and get drunk and go visit the girls and sometimes get into big brawls, and by that time he had me falling all over myself wanting to be a big timber man.

You feel sort of funny walking into a big dormitory room with your duffle on your back, and all the boys laying around or setting around of a Sunday, and all staring at you and trying to measure you up in comparison to themselves.

"Hello, stranger," said Chum Fowler, getting up, treating me like a man, though at almost fifteen I was six years younger'n him. He shook my hand so hard my knuckles stung for ten minutes afterwards, but it was all in fun, so I grinned back. "What's your name?"

I told them my name and where I was from, and that I was the new clean-up boy. We got chummy pretty quick, and Math Hardy was the first to make a bet, which was one way of getting acquainted. "Bet you can't jump over your cot, standing jump."

I looked at the cot awhile. "How much?"

"Ten cents."

"It's a bet."

We handed our bets to Chum Fowler. Then I took off my shoes and, standing jump, went over the slat-boarded cot without touching it. I was always pretty agile.

Chum handed me the money. "Now you make a bet."

I looked around that room a spell, and finally I spotted five dead flies on the windowsill. I said, "I bet nobody in this room will eat and swaller them five dead flies laying there, one at a time."

Nobody said anything for awhile. All of them looked at one another sort of grinning. "Two bits," I said.

"It's a bet."

It was Six-Toed Pete. He got up and went over to the window and picked up them flies one at a time and ate them down like they was nuts or candy, and never once changed expression, while everybody roared.

That was Six-Toed Pete, game for anything. I paid him the two-bits and that was about the quickest getting acquainted I ever managed.

Well, sir, Saturday night, five of us with our girls went to this dance at the Benton place, about five miles from the mill. We borrowed horses and saddles from the boss, fixed up little seats behind the saddles, pad or blanket tied on for the girls to ride side-saddle.

Mostly there wasn't much chance for

Mill hands in their "Sunday best," all ready for a Saturday night.

spooning in them days because dances was pretty well chaperoned and couples always went in bunches. Nor could we see very much, what with those long dresses and high necks, but what we couldn't see we took out in feeling. Because your girl sat on that pad sidesaddle and put her arms around you and ride a ways that style, and by and by they'd get pretty tired and uncomfortable so you'd change places with them, and the girls would ride straddle and you would crawl on behind them and put your arms around their waist, and then is when it become interesting. Then and when you said goodbye after you got them home. I always kissed them and I made a good job of it, too. I was worse than Tom Breneman used to be in that way, and I didn't have to use no flowers to bribe them.

WELL, this night we rode along chatting and chewing the fat, and finally shifting around, everybody talking except Six-Toed Pete, and him not saying a word. When Kitty would ask him a question, he'd either just act tongue-tied or else grunt something that didn't sound like words. On the way there we come to this laguna. It was spring of the year and lots of frogs croakin' and setting up a powerful noise.

Six-Toed Pete turns and says to his lady friend, "Toad's here."

We rode on to the dance. He played the wallflower, was too bashful to dance even once, but Kitty Loomis wasn't lacking for dances and was kept busy the whole evening. Some time towards morning we started back, and still Six-Toed Pete hadn't said anything to her. By and by we come across this laguna again, and Six-Toed Pete turns to his lady friend and says, "Toad's here yet."

That was all, not another word the whole evening, and you can't blame Kitty for feeling some exasperated.

About the time the sun was coloring up the east, we arrived back to the mill, unsaddled and bedded the horses, and was taking the lady friends who stayed there up to the house (the others we'd already dropped off) and near the back porch, Kitty up and says, "I've been wondering and wondering, Harry (that was his real name) why everybody calls you Six-Toed Pete."

And the durn fool, still not saying anything, sets down on the back step, pulls off one shoe and one sock, and wiggles his six toes for her.

Kitty squeals like a mouse had run up her leg, and tears into the house, and we hear her slamming the door.

"Is she crazy?" says Six-Toed Pete to me.

But that wasn't the last of their romance, it was only the beginning.

WHENEVER I got the chance I always kept company with Lydz Anderson, who was slim and pretty and near a growed young woman, having pushed out in the right places and stayed slim in the right places. It wasn't too often I could take her, because of my work, and because her mother wouldn't let her ride behind on horseback and made me bring a extra saddle horse for her. In fact, she much preferred the boss's buggy. That was all right with Carson when he wasn't using it, but mostly he was going with his Mrs. to the same dances.

Besides, Mrs. Anderson didn't approve of me no way. She thought I was too tough a character for her daughter to monkey around with. And I didn't do much to change that impression. It was just one thing after another with Lydz those years that didn't set me up none with Mrs. Anderson.

Even Lydz herself wasn't trying to get serious. She liked me a heap, said I was fun to go with. But she still had her eye on that millionaire that was gonna come along and marry her, or at least somebody who had some money and wasn't just an ordinary mill hand like me, or a farmer.

Just the same she liked to go with me because I kidded her along with an occasional joke and such, and she never knowed what to expect, and maybe even more because I was gradually getting the reputation of being the best dancer in the county. I should of been—I had the most practice.

I was always up to some mischief with her, as I was with all the girls, for that

matter. One time we was out on a berry-picking picnic, a lot of boys and girls, and while we was eating, setting on a log that was by a crick, I suddenly swung round on her, and back we both went into the stream and practically drowned. She didn't speak to me for the rest of that day.

Mostly it was fun to go to dances in the winter time when snow packed down in the forest and we could use a sled Mr. Carson helped me to make. We took a couple of six-by-eight timbers sixteen feet long and tapered the front ends like sled runners, then spiked four cross-bars between the timbers, laid a floor with boards and put up sideboards. We filled this about half full of hay. It was pulled by a team with a chain fastened to a whippletree. It could carry eight-ten couples and in that hay of a winter evening it made a wonderful ride. More than once I got to steering it back and forth across the road a-purpose and finally let it run into a ditch, spilling everybody out in a pile. Then we'd get up laughing and yelling and maybe throwing snow at one another, and walk a mile or more to the dance. I pulled that stunt once too often, and Lydz Anderson sprained her ankle, and that didn't endear me to Mrs. Anderson none, nor to Lydz.

IN FACT Lydz still wasn't on speaking terms two months later when Six-Toed Pete and me and Chum went to a dance at Buxton, about six miles away. Six-Toed Pete went along only after we'd worked on him long beforehand to overcome his bashfulness. Chum wasn't courtin' any ladies them days. So we went on horseback without women.

Albert Carson was taking Kitty Loomis, furnishing her with a side-saddle and mount.

"Now," I says to Pete as we was riding along, "you'll never get nowhere with the ladies just hanging back an' looking glum. You got to go after 'em. You can't win a lady makin' sheep eyes. Git up an' swing her around like you mean it."

Six-Toed Pete grunted something.

"Huh?"

"Scared to," he says.

"Which would you rather tangle with, a wild bull or a little harmless lady?"

"Bull," he says.

"That's the trouble with him," I says to Chum. "Here he's so much in love with Kitty Loomis that he can't sleep, and what chance's he got? Not a nickel's worth. You got to go out there and swing her around and grin and make like you're having the time of your life, and she's the only gal for you. Ain't that right, Chum?"

"Sure is. That's what they like. Sweep 'em off their feet when you're a-dancin'."

"Scared to," says Six-Toed Pete.

What you going to do with a boy like that? I chewed my cud awhile, and then tried another tack. "Looky here. You got to treat 'em the same way you treat your ox team." I could see Six-Toed Pete with his ox team straining on a chain that dragged a big log, him yelling and urging and cussing and using his ox-goad,

". . . If you don't like the music you can clear out."

which was a stick about six feet long with a sharp piece of iron on the end. "Move along, you blankety blank brutes. Yee-yee-yee. Come on, you ol' fool! Gee. Slog along, you blankety-blank-blank blanks!" Pete could talk plenty loquacious to them bulls of his.

"Yep, that's how to treat them," Chum agreed.

"How?"

"Like they was oxen. Just pretend you could handle them that easy." For Six-Toed was the best driver in the company, could practically make them brutes stand on their heads if he took the mind to.

"Nope," he says.

"Why?"

"Girls ain't oxen."

Well, there you have it, and wasn't nothing I could do. The dance went about like the others so far as Six-Toed was concerned. He stood off to one side in the big parlor crowded with people, mouth a little open he was that eager at everything that went on, but somehow he couldn't be part of it.

Lydz was there but would not give me a tumble, never looked at me.

I DANCED a good deal with Kitty Loomis, as Albert Carson was kept mighty busy playing second fiddle with old man Stevenson. Kitty was spry and pretty with red apple-dumpling cheeks and twinkling eyes and a smile a mile broad. You didn't see much of ladies' ankles in them days. They wore skirts that swept the floor, and high button shoes. But Kitty's ankles you saw once in a while because she was so full of ginger with her dancing that her skirts flared up. Some folks didn't approve, but that didn't make no difference to Kitty Loomis. She told me right out she liked how I danced and would I dance another dance with her, and I told her sure I would, as many as she liked.

Then I asked, "How you feel about Six-Toed Pete?"

"Ugh," she says.

"What you mean?"

"I hate him. I tell you, Reno, I hate him." That is always a good sign when a girl says she hates a boy. If she just says she doesn't like him or never much thought about it, then it's a bad sign.

So I continued, "Why do you hate him?"

"He's—he's—so grouchy. Always grunting or saying nothing or looking some place else."

"He's bashful."

"Always hanging around in the kitchen, too."

"He's mighty sweet on you, Kitty."

"Those six toes! Why, he's a monstrosity!" Well, I reckoned she could get used to an extra toe or two, so I didn't answer that.

About this time Albert Carson suddenly stopped playing his fiddle and walked across to Pete, who was just standing looking. Holding his fiddle by the neck, Albert says, "If you don't like the music you can clear out."

'Bout that time everybody stopped dancing to watch, and I could see it made Pete uncomfortabler and uncomfortabler. You could see his Adam's apple bobbing up and down. It was about as big as a crabapple. "Uh, hi, up," he says, or something similar.

"I mean it," Albert says. "Clear out."

Pete didn't budge. But I could see his hands working theirselves into fists. They was both husky boys and it would've been a good fight and even-matched, but we didn't allow fighting at dances and it was seldom anybody had the inclination, mostly very good-spirited in spite of some jealousy going around.

I comes up and says to Albert, "What makes you think he don't like the music?"

"He just stands there and makes faces at me all the time."

How could I tell him those faces Six-Toed was making was despair about Kitty Loomis every time she danced with another feller? That's why he couldn't answer either. "He don't mean nothing," I says.

It ended that way, but right off things got to working in my head. I arranged with Chum that he could have my horse to take Lydz home after I'd arranged it with Kitty that I was to take her home. We sneaked out while Albert Carson was dancing with another girl, me giving the go-home sign to Pete, and the three of us rode back the six miles together from Buxton to the mill, with me riding on Albert Carson's horse.

Albert didn't have to walk as it turned out. He rode behind Chet Duncan. But he had no gal to go home with and no gal to kiss goodnight, and he was mad enough about it to chaw somebody's ear off.

THEY MET next day down at the barn. It was Sunday, and we'd all come down to tend our teams and Albert and Pete to tend their oxen. Albert

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Courtesy J. C. Pete

An old-time method in Oregon of bringing logs to the mill.

walked straight up to Pete an' says, "I'm about fed up with you, you blankety-blank so-and-so. First you make faces at me. Next you run off with my horse and my girl."

"What you mean?" says Six-Toed Pete. He thought everything had been arranged by me and Albert. He didn't know I'd borrowed Albert's saddle horse and his lady friend.

I steps up and says, "You better get the right man, Al. I was the one that swiped your horse and your lady friend. You can ask Kitty if it ain't so."

He turned to me. He was taller than me by several inches, but not as stocky built. I never did get into many fights, no matter what they say about men with red hair. But I was always ready to hold my own if need be. I reckon I was taking after my old man. I'd had plenty of fights when I was young and going to school, but thereafter was a pleasant easy-natured feller that didn't see much sense to fighting. Unless a man was mean drunk, you could always figure an easy way to settle it. Usually just setting up a drink did the trick, or maybe backing down on something.

Albert says, "You stay out of this, Reno. I know well enough who done this to me."

"I did it and I can prove it."

He give me a look that says I'm a liar. "I know who done it. You can't take the blame for it. I know who done it."

"But I done it."

He turned around with his back to me and went on arguing with Pete. There and then I learned something else about human nature that is mighty strange to me. Mostly people expect you to lie. You tell them the truth and they won't believe you. This has got me out of many a scrape, because all you have to do is say you done it, you're entirely responsible, and they don't believe you.

Albert kept getting uglier and uglier with Six-Toed Pete, who acted guilty as hell by denying it. You have to have a twinkle in your eye and act kind of like it was a joke for people not to believe you.

So I steps up again and says, "You been doin' a lot of jawin', Al, about that bull of yours you call Jeffries. About how he can pull harder and fight better than any oxen on the place. And, Pete, you told me private you thought Al was a liar, that your Washington was a better bull all around. How about settling it by having them oxen tangle and have fun for everybody? Personal, I'm ready to wager any man here that Washington can whip Jeffries."

Well, that kinda took holt with the boys. Every now and again we'd have a bull fight down the road and lay bets on which would win. But before now it had always been a farm bull fighting a timber bull, and we'd make bets with the farm boys on our timber bull, and it was like picking money off the street, those bets, because it stands to reason that a critter that earns his keep hauling sixteen-foot logs two foot thick is bound to be stronger than any farm animal ever raised.

This was the first time anybody had suggested that two of the mill bulls have it out, which of course Mr. Carson wouldn't approve of because it takes time and money to break them bulls to hauling logs. But the upshot of it all was that the match was arranged for the next Saturday, and I got down five dollars in two bets at even money on Washington.

I WAS ALWAYS a great hand to help out in the kitchen while waiting for my team to dry off, wiping off the dishes, mixing up pastry or bread dough, finishing the churning of butter, cutting up the vegetables and in general making myself useful and picking up hints and pointers on cooking and kitchen work that have come in right handy through the years when somebody was sick or I was batching it. And I liked the female company, liked to talk with Mrs. Carson and Kitty. Mrs. Carson was quite a large chunk of lady. I used to tell Mr. Carson that it wasn't fair, him being a bigamist, for he'd married enough for two men, which would make Mrs. Carson laugh. She was very goodnatured that way.

This day I come down late and Mrs. Carson was just taking a vinegar pie out of the oven, the egg white all puffed up and thick on top. She said, "I have baked this special for Mr. Carson, for he is down in the field planting potatoes and will be very tired when he comes home." She put the pie in the pastry cupboard and went out saying, "Now, Red (some folks called me Red), don't you dare touch that pie." And she says to Kitty, who is washing dishes. "Kitty, don't you let anybody touch that vinegar pie. It is baked special for Mr. Carson, and nobody else is to have a piece."

(Continued on page 67)

Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe

Early photo of Old Town and the famous bridge, view from across the Rio Gallinas in New Town.

Billy With a GUN

Courtesy Ellen Drake

Billy Green

Courtesy Ida Blake Westwood

Newspaperman Elwyn Blake

By S. OMAR BARKER

Photos Courtesy Author

LAS VEGAS, New Mexico, called the Meadow City, was a middling wild community in the '80s and '90s. The coming of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1879 made it the trading center and shipping point for a great big chunk of New Mexico ranch land. It was one of the biggest shipping points of raw wool in the world, and prosperity helped make it also pretty raw and woolly in whoop-deedoo behavior—maybe misbehavior would come closer to the bull's-eye.

Then, as now, there were two Las Vegases, separate municipalities. Old Town or West Las Vegas and New Town or East Vegas were separated then by a single high iron bridge over *El Rio de las Gallinas de la Tierra* (Wild Turkey Creek), commonly called the Gallinas (Guy-YEEN-us). About five yumps and a viggle up Bridge Street west of the bridge was the newspaper office of the late Elwyn Blake, who later became my brother-in-law. It was from him that I heard about some of the shaggy shenanigans that got shook loose in those rollicky, rawhide days—and nights.

One of Blake's friends was a lean, black-haired young cowboy named Billy Green. This Billy was never known to fame like all those other gun-totin' Billies—Bill Hickok, Bill Doolin, Bill Longley, Bill Tilghman, Captain Bill McDonald, Billy Breakenridge, Cherokee

It would have been all right with this young cowboy to have lived a long life and died with his boots off—but other folks wouldn't let him!

Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe

Bridge Street, Old Town Las Vegas, New Mexico, looking east, 1892. Billy's cafe was on this street. An arrow points to the trestle bridge which so easily accommodated a swinging rope.

Bill, and Billy the Kid—but he was still a pretty potent pistol pointer whenever he got pushed. Like the Kid, Billy Green began to show the earmarks of gunman makin's at an early age. Unlike the Kid, outlawry never became his trade.

He was about fourteen when he caught a prominent local gambler shooting ducks on a little lake owned by his ex-buffalo hunter father. Billy ordered the trespasser off, with a pretty good assortment of swearwords for a fourteen-year-old. The gambler took out for town, but from a reasonably safe distance he turned and warmed Billy's pants with a round of birdshot, then quickly vamoosed.

More insulted than hurt, Billy ran to the house for his Dad's .30-30 and went looking for the trespasser. He spotted him ducking into a saloon on Railroad Avenue. When Billy followed, the bartender got him stopped long enough for the prospective victim to dodge out the back way. Billy never did find him. In fact, that was one gambler who was seen no more in Las Vegas. The boy's first manhunt resulted in no bloodshed, but even running a tough gambler out of town was looked upon locally as a fair to middlin' feat for a boy Billy's age.

A year or so later, as reported in Blake's newspaper, a wagonload of rollicky cowboys en route to a dance took a notion to hurraw the Green kid a little by throwing him out of the wagon. Of course it was all in fun—for everybody except Billy Green, who recorded his view of such doin's by shooting one of the cowboys in the leg. Luckily the wound was not a serious one. After hunting up a doctor for the practical joker, the rest of the cowboys let Billy go along with them to the dance without any more hurrawing.

More trouble might have come of the incident, but the next morning Billy hunted up the hurt cowboy and offered to substitute in the cowboy's job until his leg got well. The offer was accepted and this led to the kid's being hired on his own account on one of the J. W. Lynch ranches down on the Pecos.

BILLY GREEN was still in his late 'teens when an injudicious fellow cowpuncher untriggered him again. As the two of them rode along together one evening, on their way to town for a *baile*, Billy's companion got to bragging about how expert he was with a rifle.

"I could throw down with this ol' .30-30 on any six-shooter shark you want to name, before he could even start to draw Like this!"

To illustrate his brag, the cowboy pointed his saddle gun straight at Billy's middle.

"Don't you point that thing at me, you so-and-so!" said young Mr. Green.

His companion laughed—without unpointing the rifle. "What you aim to do about it, kid?"

Billy suddenly threw himself off his horse on the far side, drawing his pistol as he fell. Thoroughly startled, the bragging buckaroo quickly spurred his horse into a run. But the kid's dander was up. A bullet from his pistol ripped a shallow wound in the other cowboy's thigh, and he promptly tumbled off his horse and hollered calf rope. Billy kindly helped bandage the wound and get him to a doctor.

It didn't take long for word to get around that the Green kid wouldn't do to monkey with. (Since this victim of Billy's pistoleering later became one of New Mexico's prominent and highly respected citizens, I won't name him.)

Elwyn Blake never did believe that Billy Green ever became actually engaged in horse stealing, but the record shows that along in the late '80s several cowboys from the Lynch ranch got caught off base with a couple of dozen of their boss's horses where they weren't supposed to be, and Billy Green was one of them. A jury called it stealing and a judge assigned Billy to a little room in Santa Fe with bars on the windows.

Whether he had been guilty or just accidentally caught out with bad companions, Billy took his sojourn in the hair bridle factory to heart. With his sentence shortened by good behavior, he returned to Las Vegas, married and gave up cowpunching to help his wife run a little restaurant on Bridge Street. He was a peaceable young citizen, still with his first man to kill, and might have stayed that way but for politics.

Maybe "politics" is not a strong enough word for the kind of factional skulduggery that passed for local government in the San Miguel County of those ripsnortin' days. Whatever you call it, it kept tempers—and some guns—pretty hot. The so-called Populist movement was then sweeping the country, and Billy got to be a local leader in it. His leadership didn't last long. Members began to throw in with the outlaw element, one wing of which later came to be known as "The Silva Gang" once the identity of its leader was discovered. What had been a

(Continued on page 51)

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THE BURIED MERCURY

By MAURICE KILDARE

Photos Courtesy Author

For this fortune to be found, the wind will have to blow in exactly the right direction for exactly the right amount of time, and then never blow that way again!

Courtesy Mrs. E. B. Saudebaugh

Above, Abe Cole who found the buried mercury and lost it in a terrific sandstorm. Pictured behind Cole is Echo Cliffs, north of Willow Springs, one place where the mercury was thought to have been cached. Left, Lee Ferry below McComb Reef was the only crossing on the Colorado River for a distance of 200 miles.

Courtesy F. M. Gold

A FIERCE GUST of wind streamed sand into the trench which Abe Cole had dug against the base of Echo Cliffs. Visibility was poor but he could see the ends of some iron pipes which his shovel had just exposed.

They were six inches in diameter, and he felt confident that they extended ten feet under the sand pile. Each of the mercury-filled tubes weighed 1,659 pounds—the total worth, an estimated $65,000. The tubes had disappeared en route from Lee Ferry to Flagstaff, Arizona, in 1902.

Cole breathed hard against the red

Courtesy Mrs. Laura Preston-Runke

The boat used to work over McComb Reef was hauled north by ox teams as shown here crossing the Little Colorado River.

bandana which protected his nose against the driving sand. Recovering the pipes now would present no problem, or so he imagined. Nobody was going to carry them away. Equipment and several men would be required to get them loaded onto a wagon's running gear.

Shouldering the shovel Cole faced around into the wall of blinding sand rolling along Hamblin Wash against the 1,800-foot cliffs. He could see maybe four feet through the murk. As he walked out into the brunt of the storm he headed south, but within a hundred yards he discovered himself lost.

The wind howled and whistled; the sand cut his face. Pulling his hat down lower the man plunged resolutely on. It was only three-quarters of a mile from the cliff to the rocky road. Still, long after he should have reached it and the juniper covered mesa beyond, Cole floundered helplessly in the fierce March storm.

Finally he halted. In the wall of sand not even the faint outline of a landmark showed through. By dead reckoning Cole decided that he must be traveling east. His back was to the wind which had blown from the southwest earlier.

Resuming his walking he set off with the wind against the right side of his face. Time passed but still only the soft sand of the valley remained underfoot.

Dazed and uncertain, Cole could not recall if he had crossed the rockbottomed wash. There was less visibility than ever. Sundown had come and he was definitely lost. It was then that he found the wash, and eased gently down into it. The smart thing to do in his predicament was to wait out the storm. This he did, sitting with his back under the wall and his face resting on his knees.

Hours later Cole awakened and discovered that the wind had died. The air was free of sand, and a few stars shone in the sky. The position of the Big Dipper told him that dawn approached.

Stirring out he left the valley of sand dunes, found the road and crossed it to the mesa slope. Swinging west he soon reached his camp, located in a V-shaped swale in the mesa rim. His riding horse and pack horse stood with heads inside the brush shelter Cole was using for a sleeping tent.

Driving them away, he entered, raked blow-sand off the bedding tarp and flopped down thankfully to rest—and to think. How could he retrieve the tubes of mercury in comparative secrecy? Former owners, that year of 1907, might still have a valid claim to the liquid treasure.

SOME YEARS BEFORE a prospector had located a pool of quicksilver behind McComb Reef in the Colorado River above Lee Ferry. A company in California was organized to mine it. Along with other equipment hauled to the scene from the Flagstaff railhead, had been a boat.

Workmen anchored it in the river and tried to put down perforated pipe through a mass of boulders. The object was then to connect the pipe to a pump on shore. By this means it was hoped to recover the valuable mineral from the river bottom. After two weeks of futile effort, the attempt was abandoned. It was then that Al Kingston asked to try a firehose. To the surprise of everyone the four-inch hose, reinforced by coiled steel spring wire between the outer fabric and an inner layer of rubber, worked. The pump poured quicksilver into a collecting basin.

The pipes in which the metal was to be transported were six inches in diameter and ten feet long. One end was capped; the other contained a plug fitted with a valve.

Twenty-eight tubes of mercury had been filled when the firehose tore out of the boulders. The workmen were never able to get the operation going again so it was decided to freight out what was already on hand.

Two pipes were loaded onto the shortened running gear of each stripped-down wagon. The combined weight of this load was 3,300 pounds. Four horses were required to haul them over rocky roads and sand beds, and over a mountain divide to reach a railroad to the south.

After the wagons were loaded and started on their way, the owners dismantled the camp. They were well ahead of the cost of the project and proposed remaining that way by not attempting further expensive recovery.

Some of the pipes had been delivered to the railroad freight dock and moved onto flat cars when the owners arrived to complete the shipping. But when the last wagon was unloaded and the manifest was made out, a surprising situation developed. Only twenty-two of the containers could be found.

The freighters were questioned. Each one not only declared that he made delivery but had his helper and the railroad clerk to prove it. Evidently the six missing containers must have been removed from the freight dock after delivery. But if so, how? The town's main street ran parallel to the roofed-over shed and the passenger station. Moving that much weight took time and lifting gear. It couldn't possibly have been done quickly enough to have escaped detection in such a public place.

The owners considered the railroad company responsible for the loss. Quite a wrangle ensued, only delaying and confusing the issue. While this was going on, rumor got out that the missing pipes had been secreted across Hamblin Wash at the base of, or in, Echo Cliffs while en route to town. This was hardly a definite location of the mercury. The high, jagged peaks of salmon-pink sandstone covered a distance of seventy-seven miles. Beginning at Moen Ave near Tuba City they ran west before curving north to the Colorado River basin. Very few people took any stock in the report that the pipes had been cached. How had the thieves—and there must have been several conniving the theft—managed to unload the heavy containers and hide them?

A couple of years passed while detective agency and railroad officers kept five prime suspects under surveillance. None of them showed up with any large sum of unaccounted-for money. Nor did they act in any way unusual in their daily lives. In time the expensive watch was removed.

SECRETLY, six men were convinced that the mercury had been hidden somewhere off the road south of Lee Ferry. Three of them were Mormon Jim Black, Carl Campbell and Navajo Jim. Although they had worked on the recovery project they had had nothing whatever to do with freighting the mercury to the railhead.

At least one of them, and surely the two white men, apparently got their

LICENSED TO MAIL BY ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

evidence from one or more of the actual thieves who were being watched too closely to recover the pipes. Navajo Jim lived in the Echo Cliffs country. What he knew came from Navajo Indians who allegedly witnessed the theft.

After a few years the three men proposed joining together and locating the mercury. If unable to claim it perhaps they would be paid a suitable reward personally by former stockholders in the mining company. The organization which handled the original project had dissolved.

Abe Cole, not then interested in the missing shipment, was well aware of what the others planned to do. He and Mormon Jim were good friends.

The trio was absent from Flagstaff for about five weeks. Campbell returned to town seriously injured and spent several months in the hospital. Black was badly lacerated and shaken up. Navajo Jim was no more, having been killed on Echo Cliffs.

For a year or more the two survivors did not talk of their harrowing experience. Finally they did so only to and because Cole broached the possibility that he might go looking for the $65,000 worth of mercury.

"Don't waste your time," Mormon Jim advised. "We found and lost it. Believe me, nobody is going to get it out now."

One of the first rumors held that the pipes were removed from the wagons and cached behind Bitter Springs in a mass of rocks fifteen miles south of Lee Ferry. This story developed because, reportedly, deep skid marks cut into flat stone surfaces by metal were found. These marks could have resulted from dragging the pipes into hiding.

The mercury was also said to have been hidden anywhere along another twenty miles to Willow Springs. But such was not the case, according to the account Mormon Jim related to Cole.

This tale astounded him and it was indeed, almost impossible of belief. Had he not known them both, Campbell and Black, for many years as truthful and responsible men he would have given their weird story no credence whatever.

Navajo Jim, it seems, had unearthed the first clue to the whereabouts of the mercury. When informed by the Indian, who had no idea how to handle the project alone, Black and Campbell were skeptical but agreed to ride north with him.

After passing through The Gap, the one gateway through the massive cliffs, the Indian led them up behind the serrated points on Kaibeto Plateau. About half way to Bitter Springs he conducted them into a narrow break in the upper section of the cliffs.

Dismounting, the three men passed through the crevice onto a ledge and, over most precarious footing, into a cave. There, resting in wind-blown sand and guano were *ten* pipes identical with those filled with mercury at Lee Ferry. Black and Campbell recognized them immediately because they had helped fill them. To make sure, a valve was cracked and out spilled some of the greasy, silvery liquid.

Navajos, herding sheep on the cactus-studded plateau, claimed that five wagons, running gear only, had brought the containers up through The Gap to the break. Several white men had unloaded and deposited them in the cave. Just how they managed it the Indian witnesses did not know, because they had remained hidden almost a mile away. But after the departure of the wagons several of the herders had gone there to see what had been hidden. The pipes did not impress them and they left. This matter was white men's strange business.

THE FREIGHTERS had put in the cave nearly 17,000 pounds of unwieldy matter, an astounding feat to say the least. Yet there it was, and Mormon Jim Black, Campbell and Navajo Jim had the problem of getting it out.

They deduced that block and tackles had been employed to move the pipes over the ledge and make the turn into the cave. Holes had been drilled into the solid stone face of the cliff in two places. What purpose could they have had except to install heavy iron eyebolts for tackle gear?

Mormon Jim and Campbell were confident they could bring out the mercury the same way. Once into the break the pipes could be lowered onto rollers, wood or iron, and skidded to level ground. A tripod and block and tackle could then lift the pipes onto wagon running gear.

Three weeks were spent rigging block and tackle to the walls. To turn the corner onto the ledge, a sloping wall was drilled and shot off with dynamite. For five minutes after the explosion the entire cliff section vibrated.

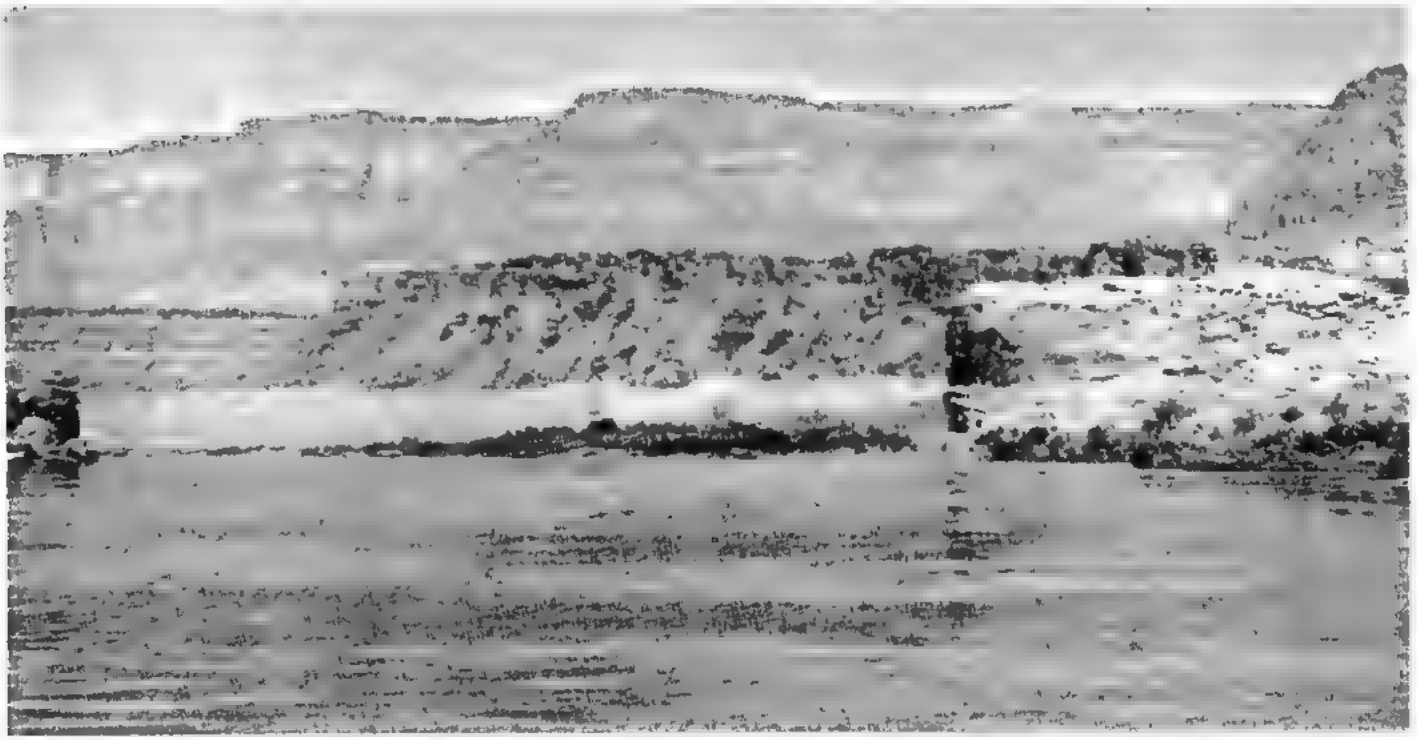
"This could be dangerous," Mormon Jim commented thoughtfully. "The peak must be faulted apart."

The first pipe was hoisted clear, with Mormon Jim and Campbell hauling on the lines from outside. In the cave Navajo Jim guided the heavy container to prevent its swinging around dangerously. Thus they maneuvered it around and prepared to move it into the clear. To do this Mormon Jim and Campbell went farther out on the ledge.

Suddenly from inside the cave Navajo Jim began yelling excitedly in his own language. The white men did not need

(Continued on page 43)

At this point the Colorado River hides McComb Reef behind which the liquid mercury collected.



HELD Prisoner by Grizzlies!

Illustrated by Walter Wilwerding

Courtesy State of Montana, Fish and Game

By TOM BAILEY

A stand-off between two prospectors and an irascible family you'd hate to have for nextdoor neighbors

JIM O'MALLEY and Jess Timberlake were two fortune seekers of the Old West who found more unfriendly Indians and fewer gold mines than any other pair of prospectors ever to swing a pack over a mule—or, at least, that was their claim to fame. But the real adventure of their restless wanderings occurred in Montana in the summer of 1866 when they were imprisoned in a cave and kept there for thirty-one days by three grizzlies while the life of Timberlake dangled by a thread.

O'Malley provided the details of their blood-curdling experience when he wrote "Captured by Grizzlies," a factual account published in the *Montana Democrat* in the fall of 1867.

O'Malley and Timberlake were gradually working their way northward along the eastern slope of the Continental Divide when Timberlake, fifty-seven, suffered a partial stroke. "I think it's my liver," he said. "Take a couple days to rest up and I'll be O.K."

They camped for two days and then went on. Near noon Timberlake collapsed, no longer able to stay on his feet. O'Malley, fifty-one, suggested they find a good campsite and stay there until Timberlake's condition improved sufficiently to permit their return to Helena, their home base.

He found a spot which seemed ideal for a camp. It consisted of twin caves facing each other across a small stream. One was well protected from rain and wind while the other was more or less exposed. The one O'Malley liked had a barricade of boulders across its front, deposited by high waters of past floods. There were openings between the boulders which let in the afternoon sunlight. Nature had really gone all out to make it a suitable place to camp, for at one end there was an opening just large enough for a man to crawl through. The blackened back wall suggested that Indians had built their tribal fires here.

Helped along by O'Malley, Timberlake was able to make it to the cave but he swore he couldn't have taken another step because his legs were beginning to feel numb.

"Might as well turn that mule loose to browse," O'Malley said. "There's plenty of water and grass nearby so she won't wander very far away."

"Don't know about that," Timberlake cautioned. "Could be grizzlies around. If she smells one she'll take off."

"There ain't no grizzlies anymore," O'Malley assured him. "All been killed off. We been out all summer and not a one have we seen."

During the late afternoon camp was established and Timberlake made as comfortable as possible. To keep the cave

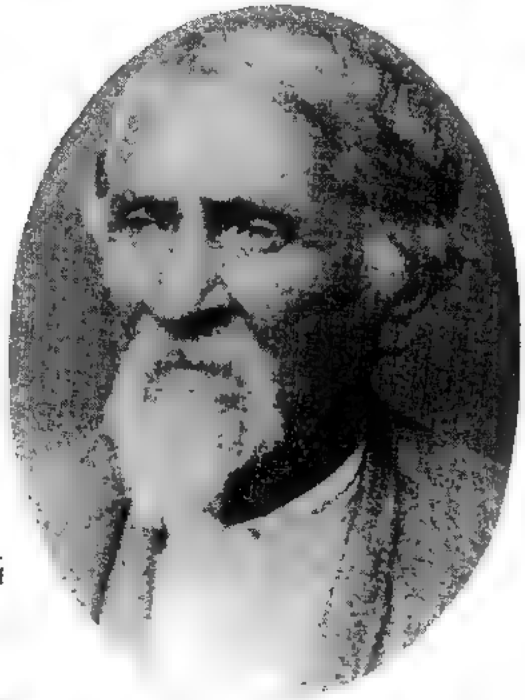
(Continued on page 54)

PHANTOM MESSAGE

Mathias Splitlog was as self-sufficient as any man on the frontier, but this time he needed help which neither his own strength nor a determined will could provide...

By E. H. BREWINGTON

Photos Courtesy Author



Mathias Splitlog, adopted citizen of the Wyandots and Chief of the Senecas.

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

Cayuga Springs Catholic Church in northeast Oklahoma. The church was built about 1894 by Mathias Splitlog in memory of his wife.

ELIZA SPLITLOG was dying. A devout Catholic, she was dying with apparently no possible chance of receiving the last sacraments of the Church. It was late September, in 1894, and the fall rains had already begun. The whole countryside was a quagmire. The roads, such as they were in Indian Territory, were well nigh impassable. The rivers and the creeks were out of their banks. The closest telegraph office was thirty miles away, and the Grand River, as well as numerous smaller streams, barred a traveler from reaching the telegraph station.

Eliza's husband, Mathias, knew that Father Ketcham was somewhere between Muskogee and Vinita. As the day was Saturday, the priest had to be on his way, by railroad, to Vinita where he would say Mass the following day. Even so, Mathias could see no possible method of getting a message to Father Ketcham.

Though normally a reticent individual, Mathias was so overcome with grief and emotion, that he discussed the problem with friends and relatives who were offering their moral support to a long-time friend in his valley of shadows. All agreed that it was hopeless to try to get a message to Father Ketcham. Yet when the priest arrived at Vinita, just at dusk on Saturday, September 27, 1894, a telegram was handed to him which read simply, "Come at once. My wife is dying." It was signed "M. Splitlog."

Without pausing to question, Father

FROM CAYUGA SPRINGS

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society
Eliza Splitlog

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society
Buggy and wagon factory at Cayuga Springs, built in the late 1870s by Splitlog.

Ketcham hired a livery rig and started to Cayuga Springs. The pouring rain made the road a bottomless morass, so in an effort to find an easier route, the hack driver cut across the pastures. Somewhere near Fairland the driver became lost and had to drive several extra miles before he found an exit from the fenced enclosure.

It was near midnight when the rig approached the ferry, and the hack driver explained to Father Ketcham that they probably could not continue farther, as the ferry man had refused to cross the swollen river for the past week. The rain was still falling in sheets.

To their surprise, when they reached the crossing, the ferryman—wrapped in a worn, weathered slicker—was patiently waiting for them. This man—an ageless Indian—was noncommittal when the hack driver tried to find out why he was waiting there in the middle of the night, when he had refused to cross in the daytime for the past several days.

As the Indian guided the craft toward the far shore, expertly dodging floating logs and other debris, Father Ketcham's hand rested lightly on the old ferryman's shoulder. "I thank God that you were here waiting for us," said Father Ketcham softly, "but I'll probably never know why."

"Jes' couldn't sleep," replied the old man. These were the only words the old Indian spoke as they crossed the treacherous, roiling river.

When the rig, carrying the hack driver and Father Ketcham, drove off the ferry, the stolid old Indian made the sign of the cross. Or was he merely wiping away the water?

Two or three hours later Father Ketcham arrived at Cayuga Springs. Reaching the dying woman's bedside, and with Mathias acting as interpreter, he administered the last sacraments of the Church. Eliza Splitlog died at 5:10 a.m., September 28, at the age of sixty-five.

None of the Splitlog family had been absent from Cayuga, and the telegraph operator in Fairland could not identify the well-dressed stranger who had sent the telegram. The stranger was never seen again in the community.

THIS WAS just one more chapter in the bizarre story of Mathias Splitlog, who was one-half Cayuga and one-half French, and was an adopted citizen of the Wyandots and Chief of the Senecas.

Born in New York State, in 1812, Mathias moved to Ohio with a portion of the Cayuga tribe when he was three years old. As a young man he lived with the Wyandots in Sandusky, Ohio. It was here that he met, wooed and wed Eliza Barnett. It was this marriage which made him a member of the Wyandot tribe.

In 1843 Splitlog, along with about 800 members of the tribe, migrated to Kansas. The Wyandots were assigned a tract of 148,000 acres on the Neosho River. This proved to be unsuitable for the tribe, so they purchased thirty-nine sections of land from the Delawares. The new holdings, located in the fork of the Missouri and the Kansas Rivers encompassed the present location of Kansas City, Kansas.

The land chosen by Splitlog for his home contained a small knoll on which he built his house. The site became known as Splitlog Hill. Standing in his front yard Splitlog could look over the Missouri and the Kaw Valleys for many miles.

By 1855 the white men realized that the Indians were living on some of the most valuable land in the area. Then began again the familiar story of agitation for Indian removal. Finally, in desperation, the Wyandots discarded their treaties and tribal rights and became citizens of the United States. As citizens they could sell or dispose of their lands as they desired. Many of the Wyandots sold their holdings, but Splitlog refused to sell.

It is written that in 1857 the Wyandotte City Company bought the land on which the city of Kansas City was to be laid out. The land company offered to buy Splitlog's home, but he shook his head and refused.

"Good for you, good for me," he said, and he lived on the land until 1860, at which time he sold it. Three acres of his property were purchased by Father Anton Kuhls for $800 and subsequently became the site of St. Mary's Church.

By 1857 most of the Wyandots had either sold or lost their Kansas holdings, so they were homeless. It was at this time that the Seneca tribe paid an age-old debt to the Wyandots by giving them 30,000 acres of land across the north end of the Seneca reservation in Indian Territory. The Wyandots settled there under the leadership of Matthew Mudeater, Chief.

(Continued on page 46)

Nowhere in the Rosebud country could you find such a laughing heart or such a lightning fist!

The Fabled French-Indian Chris Colombe

By TED COLOMBE

CHRIS COLOMBE was one of Dakota Territory's most legendary figures. Tall, good looking, with flashing black eyes, he might have stepped straight out of a Zane Grey novel.

Chris was a cowboy whose skill with horse, rope or gun was unparalleled. He was an adventurer, financier, rancher, and he founded a town in the Rosebud country which bears his name.

Some people remember him as a cold-nerved gambler whose nod at the green gambling tables was worth thousands. To some he was a bitter enemy, and they would remember he would fight one or a dozen. To hundreds of others he was a big-hearted Westerner who would give his last dollar to any family in distress.

Colombe was born approximately five miles east of what is now Chadron, Nebraska. His father was an early settler of French descent who came up the Missouri River with several wood-choppers and settled on an island in the Missouri. The island became Colombe Island by the right of possession. Here the Frenchman cut wood for the Missouri flatboats and here he married the daughter of Pierre Dorian, for whom Fort Pierre, South Dakota, is named.

One of the most dramatic acts in Chris Colombe's career was his spectacular courtship of the girl he loved and married. Like young Lochinvar of old, this mixed-breed grandson of Lewis' and Clark's interpreter rode out to clean up a frontier dance crowd and carry away the girl he loved. There are a few people still living who remember that historic fight on Pete's Creek in the Rosebud Reservation.

Those were wild times in the Rosebud country, the old-timer said, yet they were a great people, and their hearts were as big as the country where they were reared. The people of the frontier were a product of the era in which they lived.

It is necessary to go back to a Sunday morning in 1894 when a cowboy rode a foam-covered horse into Naper, Nebraska, and told the excited citizens about a bloody cowboy fight which had occurred the night before at a dance. He had ridden in for a doctor. At that time there were only two doctors in the whole country—Dr. Barney of Spencer, Nebraska and Doctor Zimmerman of Naper.

Dr. Zimmerman's destination in response to this call was a ranch located on what was known as Pete's Creek. George Pete was a white man married to an Indian woman. The doctor knew them well. Pete was a diminutive jockey-sized man, while his wife tipped the scales at over 300 pounds.

The cowboy said the whole reservation had attended the Pete's Ranch dance, and the frontier get-together had ended in a brawl. Dr. Zimmerman, dreading what lay ahead, urged his team to greater speed. When he arrived at the ranch, it was a scene of wild disorder. Drunken, bloodstained and beat-up cowboys still staggered around the ranch yard. Most of the women were in the house, crying as they bandaged and gave first aid to the more seriously wounded men. On every bed in the house lay cowboys who were too severely wounded to ride away.

As Dr. Zimmerman entered the house an Indian girl greeted him with relief and said, "Doctor, you had better take care of this one first. It's Jesse Ellston, and he is cut terribly and bleeding to death."

The young doctor was shocked at the awful evidence of brutality which he witnessed that day. Yet this sanguinary struggle had much to do with shaping the history of the Rosebud country. Because of this fight the course of a railroad was changed and a town in the Rosebud gained a name.

For years later, the mixed-blood Indian families of the Rosebud refused to talk about the fight. Most of them referred to Pete's Ranch as a bloody camp and, if questioned about the melee, usually answered, "I was outside and didn't see what happened."

GROUNDWORK for the trouble had been laid a short time before at a dance on the Missouri River. Chris Colombe, cowboy, had met and fallen in love with Emma Schunk, a pretty seventeen-year-old daughter of a very strict family living in Charles Mix County. Her father had been instrumental in the settling of that part of South Dakota. Chris had ridden to the dance alone from his ranch on Dog-Ear Creek which flows through what is now western Tripp County. During the evening the Missouri River boys had ganged up on Chris and thrown him from the dance hall, but not before Emma had promised to meet him at the party soon to be held at Pete's Ranch.

On the night which was destined to have little to do with merrymaking, Emma arrived with the Drapeau family and other settlers from the wild Missouri River country. Chris Colombe had rallied all of his friends and relatives the day preceding the dance, and a consultation was held. The cowboys were not to be outnumbered this time.

The Drapeau boys from Whetstone Creek were to play for the dance. They, too, had a large following and the grim-faced contingent from the north were not all musicians. The Drapeaus had recruited the saltiest men along the river.

George Pete was pleased at the large crowd. He hurried here and there, bidding them welcome and serving food and liquor. Most of the men and boys remained outside the house and were unusually quiet for a dance crowd. Wise in the ways of the frontier, Pete soon sensed a growing tension among his guests. Most of them were getting drunk, and most of them were armed. Some stood silently along the walls of the ballroom, and at Pete's suggestion that they check their guns, they gave only blank stares.

The party was in full swing, yet none of the wild bunch was dancing. They stood and waited, lined up against the wall. Many of the women began to seek the safety of the upstairs. Among them was the ponderous Mrs. Pete, who from the top of the stairs called to her husband, "George! You come here at once!"

Pete had no more than climbed the steps when Chris Colombe walked across the floor to ask Emma Schunk for a dance. He was hit by a river boy. This was the spark that touched off the explosion. The bloodiest fight in the history of the Rosebud followed.

With one arm Chris swung his girl

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The Colombe family. From left to right: Chris, Ted, Grace, Emma and Birdie.

Photo Courtesy Author

behind him, and then his back to the wall and a smile on his face, he downed man after man. From all sides both factions leaped eagerly into the fray. The Drapeaus and their violinist, Bill Kincade, dropped their instruments and they too joined the fight. It was too close for gun play but knives were thicker than relatives at a rich man's funeral.

It has been said that they beat and slashed at each other with every weapon available. A lamp crashed over, but the flame was smothered by falling bodies. Cowboys outside fought to get inside, and many who were inside wanted out. Using their guns as clubs they fought their way toward the door.

Outside, the bludgeoning continued with the same terrible ferocity. One after another of the river boys went down. It soon became apparent to the Drapeaus that they were fighting for their lives. They were hit from all sides, cut and bleeding. Then Frank Drapeau drew a long-bladed hunting knife, and like a cornered wolf slashed out right and left. He cut down Jesse Ellston and several others.

One Drapeau boy, a mere lad, made his way up the stairway. He was dripping with blood, and the horrified women lowered him from the window with a sheet and told him to run for his life. Frank Drapeau and Bill Kincade slashed their way outside, and Drapeau escaped on a horse. Kincade reached his horse but found someone had turned the saddle around. He was attempting to mount when he was hit over the head with a six-shooter. When he regained consciousness he was told to go into the house and play his violin or he would never leave Pete's Ranch alive.

When George Pete first heard the fighting begin he grabbed a double-barreled shotgun and started downstairs. His wife, clutching his collar, threw him to the floor and sat on him. A gun exploded below, and a bullet crashed through the ceiling into the room. The terrified women began to sing a hymn. It was impossible to see what was happening on the first floor, but George Pete had been reared on the open range, and the sounds of battle wafting up from below told him. There was hell among the yearlings.

He heard a lamp crash and smelled smoke and kerosene fumes, and the thought of his home burning while his wife sat on him placidly singing hymns, drove Pete to a frantic effort to escape. With what breath he could muster, deflated as he was by her tremendous weight, he cursed his pugnacious neighbors, his behemoth psalm-singing spouse, and the whole Sioux tribe in general.

Chris Colombe fought his way from the house, with his sweetheart on his arm. One by one he beat his opponents down until he reached his horse. He rode away with his girl in his arms, and there was no one on Pete's Creek who dared follow. The crowd outside forced the musicians back into the house. Those who were able to stand were told to play or die. The grim affair lasted till sunrise.

The next morning those who were able rode away from Pete's Creek. The "ball was over" and many a heart (and head) was aching.

CHRIS COLOMBE married Emma Schunk and took her to his ranch, a one-room dugout in the side of a hill on Dog-Ear about fourteen miles southeast of what is now Winner, South Dakota. For fourteen years they lived happily there, with only one great sorrow. Their second child, a girl, died in infancy. They had two more children, a girl and a boy.

This was the era of the free range, with no pasture fees and no taxes to pay, and the ranch on Dog-Ear Creek prospered. Chris Colombe became one of the richest and most influential men in the Rosebud country. Gregory County opened for settlement. The railroad spawned boom towns, and brought in land seekers. It was the day of the speculator, and Chris Colombe and his pretty wife became known to hundreds of people. Colombe was a gambler at heart, ever ready to take a long shot at any odds.

Then in 1909 Tripp County opened for settlement. Chris Colombe had chosen Indian allotments for his children in a tract of high rolling ground where the streams run north to the White River or south to Ponca Creek and the Keyapaha River.

Chris used his influence to have the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad

(Continued on page 60)

"GET IKE!" This is the advice often given when someone around Springfield, Colorado is searching for lost articles or hidden treasure.

And unless "Colorado Ike" Osteen is busy on his job as assistant postmaster of the town or is out on one of his own frequent treasure hunting treks he will more than likely come to the rescue in jig time, with his trusty metal locator in one hand, a shovel in the other and a loot-hunting gleam in his eyes.

After more than seven years of treasure hunting Ike is no longer a novice. The part of Colorado where he lives is full of history. The "Cut-off" of the Old Santa Fe Trail is not too far away—maybe sixty miles or so. Ike ranges over much of the area where Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and the Panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas are near neighbors. He knows almost every rancher and farmer in the Springfield vicinity, and few if any landowners knowing Ike would refuse him permission to treasure hunt on their property. They know that he wouldn't play "dirty pool" (as Ike calls it) and try to slip in without permission.

IKE gets odd requests now and then—like the time he was called on to locate a steel survey peg which helped settle a land dispute. Then there was the whiskey still a man wanted him to locate. Ike figured this hunt was one to shy away from.

An artist friend in Springfield knows Ike's knowledge of the country and asked him to find a certain kind of tree to be used as a subject for a painting!

He has been called in by farmers to find wrenches they had lost in fields while plowing. He found an axe head which had been lost so long the handle had rotted away. A boy got a "whaling" for losing it—but as Ike said, "It wasn't lost—just got covered up."

In one of his letters was this paragraph, "If a guy could just find more old dirty, tarnished money instead of so many horseshoes, square nails, butter moulds, coffee grinders, horse collars, branding irons and all the other 'junk' which the generations before us threw away or just walked off and left, that would make treasure hunting a snap. But I reckon it's better the way it is.

"If I had all the horses that belonged to the old shoes I have found I could supply the army with horses from now on. Same way with stove iron. If you would build Home Comfort or Majestic wood burning stoves from all the pieces I have dug up you could give each new bride in Colorado a new stove for a wedding present."

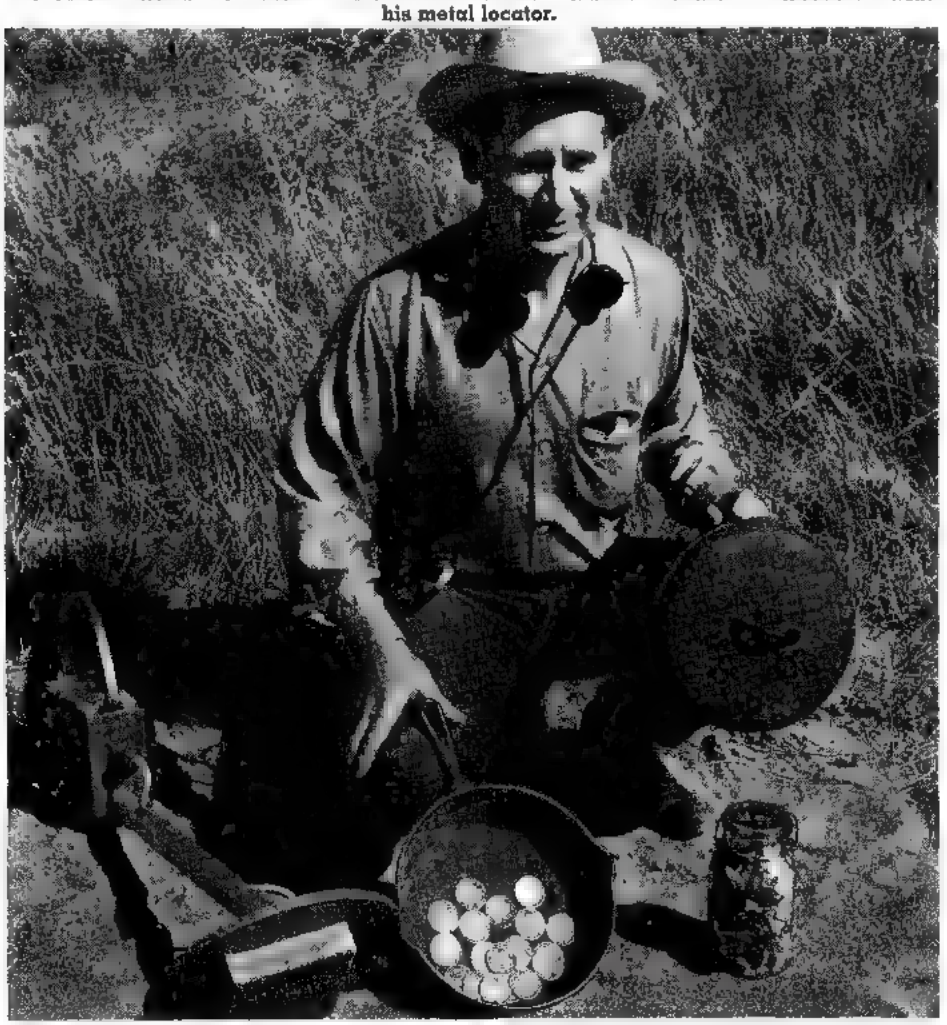
What is hidden or lost can be found again—or can it?
When in doubt, consult somebody like Ike Osteen

By C. L. PACKER

Photos Courtesy Author

TREASURE Hunter With Know-how

Ike Osteen shows the Dutch oven and some of the old silver dollars he discovered with his metal locator.



An old cowboy wants him to find his "prize pocketknife"—when Ike can spare the time. And he'll find the time. The fellow told Ike he knows "within a few feet" of where he lost it—and that's much more of a start than Ike gets on some of the stuff he is asked to locate.

A lady was riding in a car one night—going to a get-together in a small town near Springfield. On the way she changed places with her small son in the back seat. A short time later she noticed that her expensive diamond rings were missing. She recalled having removed them as she rode along in order to apply hand lotion to her "ranch-work" hands. The rings had been placed in her lap and she forgot to put them back on before stepping from the car to exchange seats with the boy. Those in the car tried to recall just where the stop had been made. Opinions varied. Somebody suggested Ike might find the rings. The next day he was called in on the search, and he found them!

MY acquaintance with this guy who seems to have an unlimited amount of pep began soon after my treasure story, "Land of Triangles, Turtles and Hatchets" was published in the August, 1965 issue of *True West*. Ike wrote to me, commenting on the story. Another story was brewing at the time, one pertaining to Bill Coe and his Robbers' Roost Gang who raided caravans on the Santa Fe Cut-off in the country to the south of Springfield. Ike dug up some information about Coe and sent it to me.

It was along about the first of June, 1966 that Ike wrote me about an upcoming Treasure Hunters' Field Trials

Ike with his loot, equipment and "treasure hunting wagon."

at Seminole, Oklahoma. Ike planned to go. I covered the event for the Tulsa *World* and met Ike, his wife Lida Mae and two of their daughters, Donna and Janet. This was my first time to see and hear metal locators in action. Ike described the sound to my wife and me, "When your locator moves over pay-dirt th' buzz soars into a loud squeal." There was a lot of loud squealing that day at the Field Trials.

In October, 1966 my wife and I and Dusky (our German Shepherd) were returning from New Mexico to Tulsa. I had written Ike we would spend a few days at Kenton while rounding up some story material in that area. Kenton is an old cowtown in the tip of the Oklahoma Panhandle, about two and a half miles from the New Mexico line.

On arrival at Kenton we parked our trailer alongside the town's one store and went to the post office to get our mail. There was a card from Ike saying if we would 'phone him he would drive down to Kenton and bring some silver dollars for us to see.

The next morning Ike drove in with his new "Treasure Hunting Wagon"—a fully equipped, compact outfit that will go places a passenger car could never make. When it's parked the top can be lifted automatically to afford standing room while the van is used for living quarters. Ike brought forth a Dutch oven and removed the lid, revealing eighteen gleaming silver dollars. "They didn't shine that way when I dug 'em up," Ike admitted.

There were fifty-three dollars in the Dutch oven when he found it in an abandoned, roofless house "many miles from Springfield."

"I had passed this old house several times, always planning on checking it out," Ike said. "On this day when I got in the vicinity I drove over and went inside. I made quick work of the walls with my locator but didn't get a buzz. The floor was dirt. Over in one corner was a hump where a stove might have stood at one time. Here I got a buzz. It didn't send me into a tailspin. You usually find old nails, pieces of iron, tin cans and stuff when checking out abandoned dugouts and houses.

"Digging down about a foot I struck metal and *did* get excited and wondered if this was IT! I uncovered a piece of rusty tin similar to metal which settlers placed under stoves on wood floors. There may have been a floor there a long time ago. The boards could have rotted away. I don't know how the tin had lasted so long. But my spirits dropped with the tin as I tossed it to one side and explored the remaining floor area.

"Finding nothing to speak of I started to leave and was about to step out the door when I took one last glance at that piece of tin. *Something* drew me back. I swung the locator again where I'd dug up the tin and it made that singing buzz I once described to you. When it was moved lower it really soared into a loud squeal. I grabbed my shovel and jabbed it into the dirt and struck iron. A hunch told me this wasn't a horseshoe or axe head. It felt solid. Digging the earth away, I stared bug-eyed at an iron lid!

"Three thoughts flashed through my mind. First, 'I've struck it this time! They always buried loot in iron pots, Dutch ovens and jars.' Then, as I lifted the lid and saw a layer of old silver dollars, 'Why wasn't it full?' And next, real quick, 'I wonder who's watching me?' and I looked around kinda scared, to see.

"It gave me an eerie feeling. Here I was fifty miles from nowhere and wondering if I was being spied on—maybe by the ghosts of those who buried the loot. Below the first layer of grimy dollars were more. They were stuck in dried grease and had to be pried out with a knife. Evidently whoever hid the money didn't take time to wipe out the Dutch oven. They must have been in a big hurry."

While Ike was telling this my wife was checking the dates on the eighteen dollars. All were dated before 1900, most of them around the 1870s. Ike has given some of the fifty-three dollars away and had sold a few.

Ike also brought along a fruit jar jammed full of flint arrow and spear points—really fine specimens. He said, "I was checking out a dump heap. I reckon someone set down the jar of flint points and just walked off and left it."

AFTER LOOKING AT the loot and examining the van we climbed in and took off. The Elzy Tanner place is a few miles out of Kenton. Located near a towering pinnacle called "Lookout Point," the house commands a view of Black Mesa and the Rio Carrizo. "Robbers' Roost"—what is left of it—is on

Elzy grins as he whittles a petrified stick while seated on a section of petrified tree.

The author's wife, Magdalen, and dog, Dusky, stand at one corner of what is left of historic Fort Nichols.

the Tanner property, not far from the house. Here it was that the notorious Coe Gang of Santa Fe Trail days had their fort—the Roost. From the top of Lookout Point Coe's sentries watched for caravans on the Trail to the south—and for enemies such as soldiers and lawmen.

Rockhounds should see the Tanner house. Petrified rock decorates the lower front part of it. All of the rocks were obtained on their land. A fossilized leg bone of a dinosaur was lying in the front yard. Inside the house we were shown many beautiful rock specimens. Elzy gave us permission to photograph points of interest such as the foundation stones of Robbers' Roost and Lookout Point. Then he took us on a hike up a rocky trail along one side of Lookout Point, showing us a place in a crevice where he found a human skeleton many years ago. There was no way of knowing if it had been one of Coe's men.

Fossils in rocks were examined at various stops along the route. At one place were big hunks of petrified trees—trees which once flourished here when all this area was a great inland sea—before the Rocky Mountains were born. Then dinosaurs waded in the waters and fed on foliage which grew along the shores. The largest "tree" section was maybe six feet in diameter.

We returned to Kenton about noon, then veered to the north. Ike drove that van in places I'd not want to take an ordinary car. After many miles and a lot of canyons we bumped down a rocky road to a dead end and stopped in front of a comfortable, modern ranch house owned by relatives of the Osteens.

We visited an abandoned copper mine on their land. Ike has been in it countless times. He took a flashlight and we followed him into the horizontal shaft about 100 yards to its end. The shaft, seven feet high and the same in width, is cut into solid rock in the side of a mesa. It was hard to imagine men with only picks, shovels and dynamite performing such a grueling task. Here and there to either side and on the ceiling of the shaft Ike flashed his light and pointed

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Shown at the left in the photo is the east tip of Black Mesa. Carrizo Creek is in the middle distance. The stones in the lower left of the picture are the remains of the old rock fortress—Robber's Roost.

Wild Old Days!

HOW TALES GET STARTED

By J. Frank Dobie

Written in February, 1947

ON THE ROAD from Del Rio to Comstock, I picked up a man about twenty-five years old. From his speech I thought he was from the East Side of New York or Brooklyn. That speech has always sounded more foreign to me than any British dialect. He wanted to find out my business, which he didn't, and I did not give a whoop for his, but couldn't keep from learning that he was on his way from New York to El Paso to take a paint job. He kept looking at the rocks, low brush and barren ground over the fences along the highway west of Devil's River. Three times he said, "Holy gee, the Texans fought to get this! Holy gee, can you imagine it!"

The people out this way are still authentic Texans in the bragging. Instead of tiresomely talking about how good everything is, better even than California has, they delight in making things appear worse than they are. In the old-timey Texas way, they brag in reverse. One was telling me about riding with a stranger.

"What on earth do those goats eat?" the stranger asked, pointing to some mohairs.

"They break up the rocks and eat the kernels of them," the rancher replied. The stranger was satisfied.

Some people might be surprised to know how few border dwellers, especially farmers and ranchers, favor building the proposed rabbit-proof, prisoner-of-war style, barbed wire fence to guard the international border from Brownsville to the Pacific Ocean. This fence would prevent coyotes from coming across into the sheep and goat country, and if the coyotes did not come across, some government trappers would be without a job. It would simply unbalance nature. It would ruin the tradition of the frontier. Instead of having to cross a natural river, a man with the sheriff behind him would have to get through the kind of machine-made contraption that surrounds concentration camps. It would be ag'in' nature, and I'm ag'in' it.

TALKING about coyotes, I had a letter the other day from Jim Dan Hill, now president of Superior College in Wisconsin. He was reared out in the Eldorado country, and being so far from water for so long out there probably influenced him to write a book about the Texas Navy. This book on the Texas Navy in turn influenced some people to regard Jim Dan Hill as a folklorist. A folklorist is a person who writes something about nothing. Jim Dan Hill left the Texas Navy and left his college presidency to fight as a field artillery

J. Frank Dobie

colonel in this war [World War II]. I got to know him in England, though we were acquainted with each other in a way before. Lately we have been having correspondence over heroes.

He wrote me a letter saying that real woodsmen never made up the Paul Bunyan yarns ascribed to Wisconsin and Minnesota lumber camps. Newspapers ran out of logging news when the country began to run out of logs. They then dusted off tall tales that had been in existence in the English language for centuries and attributed them to Paul Bunyan. "I know for sure," he said, "that combat soldiers in this war never heard of Kilroy. I grew up in West Texas and never heard of Pecos Bill until a few years ago. It's the post-operative crowd that always cooks up this kind of tripe, not the real lumberman, the real soldier, or the real cowboy."

In responding to these opinions I wrote Jim Dan Hill as follows: "All the so-called folk heroes of America have been built up mostly by journalists and not by the folk. That is the main reason they are so shoddy. Take Dave Crockett. In his lifetime and for years thereafter, all the tale-manufacturers that readers of newspapers could stand and that almanacs could hire were prating about the Crockett legend and adding to it childish tales supposed to be humorous.

"About 1923 Tex O'Reilly published an article on Pecos Bill in the *Century Magazine*. He told some tall tales and said he got them from old hands out west of the Pecos. A couple of years after that I began spending a good deal of time in the Pecos country and west of it, in both Texas and New Mexico. I was among old-timers getting their lore. I would ask about Pecos Bill, and I never met a man who had ever heard of such a character. Later a young man from Princeton wrote me that he was going to write a thesis on Pecos Bill and asked me to contribute what I know of this legendary figure. Somebody wrote a book under the title of *Pecos Bill*—the great Western folk character of the ranges. Tex O'Reilly sued the publisher for purloining his thunder and alleged that although he had called Pecos Bill a folklore figure, he had in fact created him and made up the stories about him. And now the schoolchildren in Pecos, Texas, know lots of 'old-time stories' about Pecos Bill."

In concluding this letter, I implored Jim Dan Hill to give me any recondite facts he might know about coyotes. This is part of his voluntary contribution:

"WHILE I was on the faculty of the New Mexico School of Mines, a report came to my attention involving a coyote and a tenderfoot, I talked to this tenderfoot after the excitement was all over, but he was suffering so from nervous shock that I did not consider him a reliable witness. This is what seems to have happened. In the bosque flanking the Rio Grande near Socorro, was a large colony of beavers. Being warm-climate beavers, their pelts were not worth enough to attract poachers and they were thriving. This tenderfoot went down to observe them.

"Near one of their dams, he saw a coyote slinking through the underbrush, got excited, and ran from him. Of course, a coyote will pursue anything that shows fright and exudes through the skin the odor that fright makes glands give out. The coyote went to gaining and the tenderfoot climbed a poplar tree. The coyote at once began siege operations at the base of the poplar, where he was soon reinforced by his mate. A few howls brought up four full-grown pups. They were all full of pep and demonstrated more viciousness than did their parents.

"The tenderfoot decided to sweat it out. In fact, that seemed the only possible decision for him. He wriggled up the poplar to a more comfortable seat in the crotch made by a big limb. Here he began sending out loud cries for help. After he had spent about four hours in the tree, somebody heard him. Not more than half an hour before rescuers arrived, the old male coyote left the tree with the air of a person who has been suddenly struck by a bright idea. Of course, he did not take his family with him. They stayed on duty. In a very short time he came back leading four

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SYMBOLS

By RAYMOND DOW

"ON THE fragment of a weathered map he had extracted from the old Bible, he saw several crude markings. Some seemed to indicate trees and mountains—three peaks seemed to be connected by a directional line, and a large triangle containing a black circle was etched onto a snake-like squiggle that might have described a draw or arroyo or stream. . . ."

What do treasure signs mean? Old maps, tree and rock markings, strangely arranged miners' tools and weapons, *can be* enormously helpful in determining the site of a lost mine or hidden treasure. But they must be deciphered accurately or they can lead the searcher away from, not toward, his goal.

Often treasure-seekers mistake astronomical notations, military markers, and even Boy Scout signs for lost treasure guides. In many areas where gold or other treasure is supposed to be buried, latter-day campers, cowmen, or hunters may have made notations of their own. Even if one is following an authentic trail, he may become confused or led astray by directions to a fisherman's cabin or a salt lick.

There are other types of signs, too. Surveyor's marks can actually be a help in affirming location if one knows how to identify and read them.

During the first few decades of this century, beggars and itinerants had a sign system by which they indicated towns good for a touch or those which had vigorous or brutal law enforcement.

Timbermen's signs can be found throughout the heavily forested areas of the U.S. (In fact, in certain areas, arrows—under other circumstances a sign indicating treasure locations—have been found carved into ancient trees which the British Royal Navy had designated for cutting.)

Indian signs, gypsy marks, and "coded" lovers' messages also can be—and often are—mistaken as treasure indicators. A few of these marks are shown below:

MINING SIGNS

Power line

Cemetery

Mine shaft

Telegraph

Prospect hole

Mine

Quarry

Canal and locks

MILITARY SIGNS

Fort

Barbed wire

Heavy mortar

Section of fire

Anti-aircraft machine gun

Artillery observation post

Observation post

Light tank

Light Howitzer

Howitzer

Food and water

Squad

Squad defense

ASTRONOMICAL NOTATIONS

Distance

North

South

Longitude in orbit

BIOLOGY

Annual plant

Evergreen plant

Lacking in characteristics

Plant bears fruit only once

Climbing plant

A hybrid

SURVEYOR MARKS

A point of the line,
also shown as

On the line,
also shown as

Boundary lines,
also shown as

Elevation datum (vertical)

Elevation datum (horizontal)

INDIAN SIGNS

Man points to treasure

Man points to treasure, long leg and long arm

AND SIGNS

—to loot and mines

Go from triangle point in a straight line

Same as above, but go armed and watch for trouble

Indian burial grounds

ASTRONOMY

The Sun

The Earth

Mars

Full Moon

Fixed stars

Uranus

WOODSMEN'S SIGNS

Woodsmen, hunters and trappers use many signs, all consisting of cuts, slashes or gashes in tree trunks. Generally they all mean "This is the trail." They also snap branches on trees or in brush to indicate the way. As these signs heal they became covered with bark. An experienced treasure-seeker can estimate how long ago they were made by examining the growth over the scars.

PIRATE TREASURE SIGNS

Cross marks the spot

Anchor shows good anchorage

Shows trails in woods

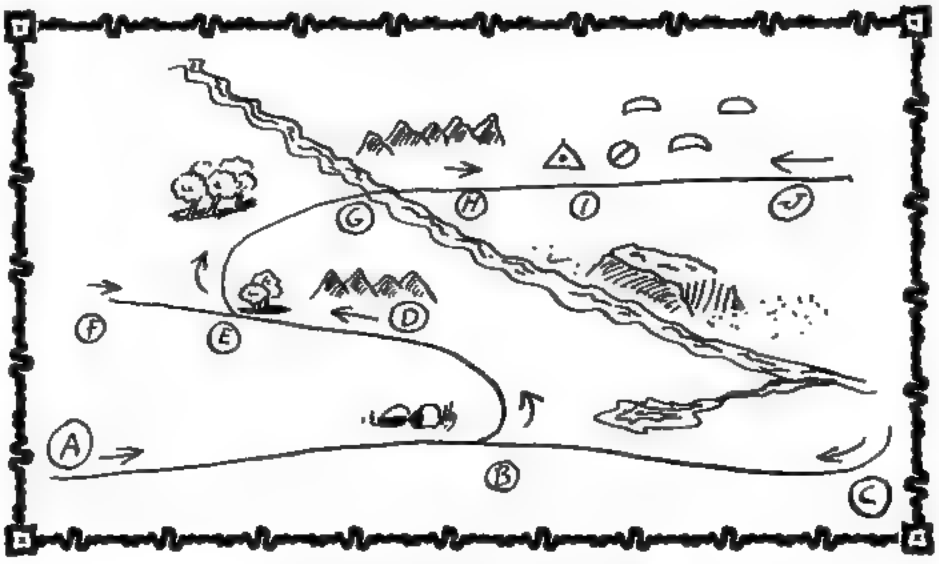
Shows dangerous reefs

Numbers depth in fathoms (6 feet)

7

FOREIGN SIGNS

These signs also are innumerable and come from all nations. Many of them approximate our own treasure signs. It should not be forgotten that most of our treasure signs are of national or Spanish origin, but people from many lands and educational backgrounds came to seek wealth in the new land. The railroad built by the Irish from the East and the Chinese from the West. Hindus, Africans, Mexicans, Chileans and Frenchmen came with the gold rush. Karl von Mueller found ancient Greek symbols on a treasure map. This had not been made by an ordinary '49er, but by someone who had been given a classical education, possibly a priest or college professor.



Typical Spanish treasure map.

CATTLE BRANDS

Most cattle brands are composed of geometrical figures and initials. They are in endless variety but generally are locally known, so are easily recognized by one familiar with the area.

INITIALS

Many people cut their initials in trees, stones, and anything else that is prominent. Sometimes these are leads to treasures, as in the case of the unfortunate Montez Veronica Rodriguez, who was buried with a fortune under her initials, M. V. R. Or the fabulous Lost Harley Cache which is buried in Alaska under his initials. Most of the time, however, initials are just the idle mutilation of nature by people who have nothing else to do.

WEATHERING AND TAMPERING

Lastly, signs may change over a period of years. Rain, sun and frost can alter a marking, or they may have been tampered with by vandals or treasure hunters who want to mislead those following them. Thus ▭ becomes this: ⊏, ∟, ⊔, ⊓ etc.

Another type of treasure map—the Spanish—is shown above. The explanation of this map is as follows: Starting at A, follow the arrow to B, which shows a turn to the left. Proceed to D, passing four hills on the right, to E, then turn right and proceed to G, cross the stream there. At H pass five hills on the left and go on to I, which shows the treasure is buried within a triangle of three trees or rocks. Proceeding, you see that they are rocks, and a fourth rock with a pointer on it indicates where the treasure is buried.

This of course would only happen with a perfect map and perfect signs. It is very likely some of the signs would have been lost or destroyed; then you would have the problem of trying to find the next sign. Sometimes vandals destroy or change the direction of the signs, which causes even more confusion.

You will note that C was not mentioned above. C is there only as a check if you go astray at B. F and J are on the map for the same reason. Also, should you enter the location from C, instead of A, then A becomes the warning sign to return. Should you enter at F or J, signs D and H would be the signs to warn you to return to the last sign and start again.

All treasure maps are not as easy as these samples, but if you work on them and the signs are still around, you could eventually find your way to buried treasure. Good luck!

CAVALRYMAN TURNED

Colonel Shoup hardly knew which was rougher—Indians or longhorns!

By ETHEL KIMBALL

Photos Courtesy George E. Shoup, grandson of Colonel George L. Shoup

BITTERNESS welled up in his throat as Colonel George L. Shoup looked down at the lifeless, mutilated body.

He had already seen too much of death in its cruelest, ugliest forms during his service with the cavalry in this terrible Civil War. And he had been heartsick at each death, especially so when he had seen one of his best friends killed. But this was the worst so far, because the dead man he was staring at was his own brother.

The colonel's troops formed a ring around him, keeping a little distance back in respect for the naked grief on the officer's face. They thought a lot of this man who had led them through so

Below, Colonel George L. Shoup stands holding his son William in front of his residence, built in 1867. Surrounding them are friendly Shoshones and Bannocks, who greatly depended on advice from Shoup and were always given food at his home.

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RANCHER

Pioneer ox teams hauling wool in the last days of their use as dray animals.

many engagements with the enemy, and they admired the unaffected modesty he had maintained despite all his triumphs and accomplishments.

As for the colonel, he may have been wondering how he ever got involved in the bloody struggle. He had started west in 1858 when the first placer mines were discovered in Colorado, traveling with wagons, oxen and supplies purchased in Missouri. He had headed for the gold fields by way of the Santa Fe to Denver, then on to the mines. Once at his destination, he sold not only the supplies but the equipment and oxen as well, then returned to Missouri to buy another freight outfit and make another trip.

He was still in the trading business in 1861 at Buckskin City in the South Park when the Civil War began. The conflict at first seemed far removed from the rugged mining camps, but when an urgent call came for volunteers to serve in the plains country and relieve the regular troops for service in the East, Shoup and many others in South Park responded.

Shoup's rise through the ranks was spectacular, though no one doubted his promotions were well deserved. He was made First Lieutenant while serving in the First Regiment of Cavalry of Colorado. As Lt. Shoup, he was appointed a Deputy U. S. Marshal, and later he was advanced to full Colonel in the Third Cavalry Regiment. These Regiments patrolled the vast country from the Platte River to the north into Texas and New Mexico, operating with New Mexico troops, constantly battling the Indians and outlaws who were trying to take over. And now here he was, kneeling beside a beloved brother who was dead because of renegades who had taken advantage of a young nation ravaged by war.

"This is the work of Espinoso," Shoup gritted as he spread an army blanket over the twisted corpse. "Espinoso and his Mexican band."

The troops shifted uneasily, wanting to get on with the job simply because any activity might release some of the awful tension they felt. But their leader wasn't finished. His eyes, frozen with pain and hate, held them motionless as he said, "Do what has to be done, then get ready to ride. Your orders are to kill without quarter whenever and wherever the enemy is found. And," here he hesitated, his eyes probing first one face then another, "I am personally putting a reward on the head of Espinoso. It will be paid in full the day any one of you has proof that he is dead."

From that day Colonel Shoup became a demon, driving himself and his men to the point of exhaustion day after day. Indeed, the results of the onslaught were so effective that before long the only outlaws left alive were those who left the country—and left in a hurry.

Confusion and fear demoralized the renegade bands, and during the bloody mop-up campaign, Espinoso lost his head. Literally. It was delivered in a sack to Shoup for identification and the reward he had placed on it!

AFTER being mustered out in '65, Col. Shoup loaded up with merchandise and trailed to Virginia City, Montana, and the famous Alder Gulch gold fields, where he again entered into the mercantile business. The following year brought news of the great discoveries across the Continental Divide on Napias Creek in Idaho Territory, near the present ghost town of Leesburg. The colonel was one of the first businessmen to arrive and open a store, though he also kept the one at Virginia City in operation for another year.

This new move started out to be just another business venture, but almost from the first Shoup realized that this place was different. He was deeply attracted to the beautiful valley at the foot of the mountains below and east of Leesburg. And, visionary that he was, he also saw a tremendous future in the rich soil available for farming, and in the thousands of acres of virgin grazing ground, all as yet untouched by man.

Shoup had an uncanny way of looking ahead. He felt that the end was near for the reckless era of new gold discoveries; the time was coming when a man must settle down or lose his chance for permanent security. This new place was where he wanted to spend the rest of his life. So with characteristic quick action, he sent for his family and began making preparations.

The last level place before entering the high mountain country of the gold camps was on the east bank of the Salmon River, near where the Lemhi River entered the mother stream. It was the natural place to set up a permanent base for supplies, and it was here that Shoup settled with his family. In time to come, the main street of present Salmon City would run past the log store and log residence Shoup built that first year.

In the rear of the store, Shoup dug a huge cellar to be used for winter storage of the store's perishable goods. Behind the cellar he erected two large holding corrals, a branding corral with a chute, and a log stable in the center, all to handle the cattle he would need for his customers.

Beef was one of the most necessary foods through the settlements, and when the gold rush began at Leesburg, the ever venturesome cowman was fast on its heels. The first drives, steers four years old and up, came from the herds of western Montana where cattle had been building up since 1864. Some of the experienced pioneers also brought beef cattle and milch cows, knowing how readily meat, milk and butter could be turned into gold.

Many of the longhorn steers which had originally come from Texas found their last destination in the Salmon River area, and hundreds of them went through Shoup's corrals for branding. This in itself was no small task when one considers that the cattle had spent all their lives on open range; had never been restrained in any way; had never seen a fence, and had never been gentled or even fed by a human being. They were as vicious and dangerous as wild animals —which, indeed, they were.

Branding day, consequently, was an occasion for community cooperation, looked forward to as eagerly as a rodeo might be today. A huge jug of free whiskey, set high and safe on a post, was never allowed to run dry while the pioneers tackled the hard, dirty, bruising work of marking the cattle. And that jug was often the sole solace—even inspiration—of exhausted, grimy men before the job was done.

On one particular occasion, branding was done early on a morning following a heavy rain, which made footing a bit precarious. Late in the afternoon Lige Mulkey was busy on the running board which extended along the corral's chute,

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The first bridge to span the famous "River of No Return" had toll gates, as shown above. Men and supplies headed for the gold fields crossed from Salmon City, at the far end of the bridge, to trails leading up the mountains to the west.

prodding the rebellious cattle. Suddenly he lost his balance, pitching full length into the corral. Up to their knees in mud, the savage longhorns tromped over Mulkey, burying him in the muck.

The boisterous laughing and hollering of his companions silenced ominously. For a few seconds they seemed paralyzed. Then, unmindful of the danger to themselves, several of them vaulted into the corral, and by sheer brute force finally reached Mulkey and pulled him to safety. The men couldn't tell how badly he was hurt because he was a mass of soft mud from head to foot. But after the slime was wiped from his face and a gulping slug from the jug went down his throat, Mulkey was up and ready for another go at branding.

FUN AND DANGER went hand in hand during every drive of beef from the lush meadowland on the east side of the river to the mining camps in the mountains. Since the only ford lay between the town and the steep trail leading westward over the mountains, the cattle had to be driven through the full length of Salmon City's main street.

It was standard procedure to halt the herd on the outskirts of town, where extra riders would cut out a bunch of fifteen or twenty steers and attempt to rush them through Main Street and on across the river to hit the trail leading to Leesburg. With yelling riders behind and on each side—and every one of them slashing and popping the eight-foot whips which all cowmen carried those days—the vicious frightened longhorns were held close and forced in a run down the street.

Occasionally a drive would go smoothly. The cattle would race through town, down the gentle incline to the public horse-watering spot, splash across the stream and head for the mountains. But these times were in the minority. Usually the longhorns would never get more than halfway through town before their ferocious nature took over and they were ready to fight the driving horsemen or anything else in sight. Keeping a near-ton of anger-crazed wild animal going in a straight line if it didn't want to go in a straight line was simply humanly impossible. Many times a bunch would break away and scatter to the four winds, cleaning up the street as it went, and charging through any door which happened to be open. "A bull in a china shop" became much more than just a cliché in Salmon City.

One day a drive had successfully run the town and was about to plunge into the river when a Chinaman suddenly stepped out of a house near the riverbank. He had thought the noisy herd was safely passed, but his timing was bad. In a flash, one of the infuriated beasts spotted the Chinaman and took for him. The startled Chinaman whirled and ran back for the cabin, with the steer gaining on him at every jump, wicked horns hooking for his pants. By the time the man reached the door it was obvious there was no time to slam it and keep his uninvited company out, so the Chinaman didn't even slow his pace—he just made a headlong dive under the bed. The steer skidded across the floor, rammed his sharp horns under the bunk and heaved it high in the air, then dropped it upside down, burying the Chinaman beneath the wreckage. That was all that saved the panicked Chinaman—he now had a safe place to hide. And except for violent trembling, he lay perfectly still while the powerful steer gored, trampled and tore until the inside of the cabin was in complete ruin.

A rider who witnessed the Chinaman's flight had followed the steer to the door, but was helpless to do more than merely watch the destruction. When the maddened beast decided to come out, it was the cowboy's turn for fast action. Still full of fight, the longhorn charged the horse, and only by hightailing out of its path did the rider save himself and his mount from the horns which had been polished on the Chinaman's bedding only seconds before.

AN EXAMPLE of what could happen when a drive was "unsuccessful" was given on a certain Monday when most of the women of the town had washings hanging bright and clean on their clotheslines. The steers broke away from a drive, scattered in all directions, and with their customary fiendish anger attacked every wet flapping line of clothes in sight—slashing, ripping and trampling.

The drovers were close behind, cursing and cracking their whips, and after a lot of hard riding finally got the longhorns rounded up and bunched together once more out in open country. A count was taken and showed one steer was missing. Now the dangerous part would start. Who among them would dare go back to town to look for the lost animal? Who dared face all those angry women?

"Well," one of the riders said at last, "no use sittin' here jawin' about it. It's gotta be done, so let's git at it. I'll go—if the rest of you will go with me."

In the meantime a housewife had come out of her house to gather her clothesline wreckage, which she hurriedly carried inside and then went looking for a man—any man—just as fast as she could go. As luck would have it, the first men she encountered were the drovers who had just ridden back into town, and they fidgeted nervously as the distraught woman dashed up to them.

"I'd sure take it kindly if you would help me," she said to the first in line. "There are some strange noises in my cellar, and I'm afraid to go down in it to look."

Much relieved that the woman was frightened instead of angry, the drover answered, "Ah, ain't nothin' but cats. Ain't scared of a cat, are ya'?"

"It doesn't sound like any cat I ever heard," she replied, and then added pointedly, "I heard the noise when I passed the cellar with an armload of ruined clothes off my clothesline!"

The cowboy winced, ducked his head and muttered, "On second thought, I guess I'd be glad to go chase the cat out for ya'."

Reaching the cellar, he opened the long, sloping door which covered the outside stairway, and descended to the bottom where he unfastened and pushed the inside door wide open. For a fleeting moment he stood amazed. Not over six feet in front of him stood a big, wild-eyed steer! There was but one thing to do, one way to go, and he cleared the stairway in two frantic jumps, the steer right behind him. Just in the nick of time he dodged behind the low cellar corner as the steer flashed by and took off for open country, right through all the dooryards that were in his line of flight. For awhile the dazed drover

Truly the marvel of its age, the three-story brick building erected by Colonel Shoup was the pride of the entire community. The building is in use today.

couldn't figure it out. How had that huge animal got into the cellar when both the outside and inside doors were securely shut and fastened?

A little investigation revealed that the steer had started to cross over the cellar and had fallen through. No one had seen it vanish, and no one had noticed the hole through which it tumbled.

Another oft-repeated story tells of a ruined washing which had been hanging on the clothesline of a "house of ill repute" near the river, one of several where gold was dug without a shovel. The resident of the house lost little time cornering the hapless cowboy following the rampaging steer, and proceeded to call him every bad name she had ever learned from her contact with drunken miners, muleskinners and outlaws in the territory.

"And if there's anything I've forgot, you are it, too!" she finished hotly.

The startled, red-eared cowboy had never heard such language in all his life. He ducked his flaming face under his wide hat brim, and stammered, "You ain't left nothin' out, lady. Believe me, you ain't left *nothin'* out."

The cowboy's heartfelt statement was laughed about in the saloons for many a day.

WITH the constant demand for beef and with plenty of free grass, it was natural that Col. Shoup kept bringing in cattle to complement his general merchandise business. Jerked beef, or jerky as it was called, was used by everyone the year round, for fresh meat couldn't be stored for any length of time. Only small drives were made to the mining camps during the summer months, and it was late fall before the bunches were increased to provide a winter's supply for miners isolated in the high mountains. Prices were high, but definitely not out of line when one considered the time, work and distance involved in getting a steer to its purchaser.

By the early '70s, locations of ranch lands were in full swing and local production began to meet the demands for farm produce, but the prolonged depression which had crippled most of the nation in the aftermath of the Civil War began to spread west. And by 1874 the seemingly boundless supply of gold from the placers was becoming scarce.

There was no outside market for anything except gold, and so it fell to the merchants to "carry" those who didn't make enough money to buy necessities. No one was refused the needed assistance, but there were many times during the next few years when it was a heavy burden on the merchants to buy and transport the terrific amount of supplies it took for the community to last through a winter and spring.

One by one the businessmen went under, either going completely broke or quitting and leaving the country before they lost everything. At the last there were only two firms left in Salmon City, and the colonel's was one of them. His friends outside Idaho Territory couldn't understand why he didn't leave, too, for they knew he could have gone wherever he wished and enjoyed a prosperous life simply by using the connections he had with influential people all over the nation.

His answer to their questions was always a flat, "No. This is my home. These people are my friends," and he tightened his belt a little more, refusing to turn anyone away who needed help,

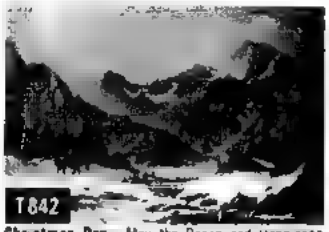
(Continued on page 41)

PICK FOR '68 FROM THE BEST IN FULL COLOR

CHRISTMAS CARDS OF THE

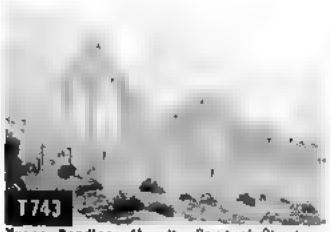
T841

From Our Outfit to Yours! — Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year — **Long**



T842

Christmas Day — May the Peace and Happiness of Christmas be with you all Year — **Lowdermilk**



T743

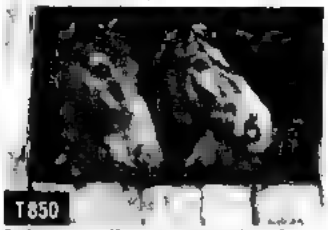
Yucca Candles — May the Spirit of Christmas abide with you, etc. — **Milton**

T844

A Good Day For Visiting — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year — **C. Hurley**

T749

Forest Cathedral — May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace, etc. — **Hasberg**



T850

Stablemates — May the meaning of the Season be deeper, . . as Christmas comes, etc. — **Dick**

T751

Caroling Surf — May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you all Year — **Moreton**

T852

Frosted Steam — Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year — **Howard Fern**

T857

Night Herder's Watch — May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you etc — **Delano**

T858

Through the Aspen — Greeting is an appropriate, merry and cheerful western verse — **McLean**

T859

A Christmas Sampler — May the warmth . . of Christmas be with you all the Year — **Nicles**

T860

An Indian Pictograph — May Peace be your Gift at Christmas, etc. — **Drummett Echohawk**

T865

The Gift of Light — May the Peace and Happiness of Christmas be with you all the Year — **Lenon**

T866

The Wonder of Christmas Morning — Christmas Greetings & Best Wishes for all the Year — **Thomas**

T867

"Christmas time has come again" — Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year — **Ralston**

T768

Ocotillo Blooms — Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for all the Year — **Lau**

T873

Early One Day in Dec — Wishing you the Joys of an old-fashioned Christmas, etc — **Schwiering**

T874

Shepherd's Christmas — Merry Christmas and a New Year chuck full of Happiness — **Hopkinson**

T875

Merry Christmas to You and Yours — Card by C. M. Russell, shown sideways

T876

A shaft of light across the land — With good wishes for Christmas etc — **FitzSimmons**

T881

Thinking of you this Christmas Night — and wishing you Happiness and Prosperity in the many Moons ahead — **Hopkinson**

T882

We've Packed Up and Moved — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at our new spread! — **Thomas**

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WEST BY THE LEANIN' TREE RANCH

T845

Christmas Eve Callers – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – **Bernard Thomas**

T746

Decorating the Desert – Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year – **Lee**

T747

The Joy you give to Others – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – **Christoffersen**

T848

When Neighbors Meet – Best Wishes at Christmas, etc. from Our Outfit to Yours – **Parts**

T853

Bells of Christmas – May the Spirit of Christmas Abide with You etc – **Hampton**

T854

Memories of a Western Christmas – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – **Tilton**

T755

An Indian Christmas Carol – May Christmas bring you gifts of Peace Joy etc – **EchoHawk**

T856

Tree Cutting Time – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – **Robert Meyers**

T861

A pack of Good Wishes for Christmas – verse ends . . From all of us to you – **FitzSimmons**

T862

A Happy Pair – Christmas Greetings from the two of us, double Good Wishes, etc. – **FitzSimmons**

T863

Chuckwagon Cheer – Greeting is friendly appropriate verse by S. Omar Barker – **Walter Graham**

T864

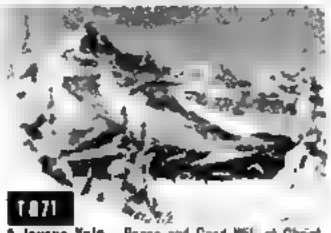
Cabin in the Pines – May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you all the Year – **Warren**

T869

A Tree for the Ranch – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – **Charles Paris**

T870

Clearing Skies over Superstition – Peace and Good Will at Christmas, etc. – **Lowdermilk**



T871

A Joyous Yule – Peace and Good Will at Christmas and through the New Year – **Kerswill**

T872

Making Christmas Rounds – Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for the Year – **FitzSimmons**

T877

Peace – A Christmas wish for you and all the world, etc. – **Bonahon**

T778

"I will lift up mine eyes . . " – May the Peace and Joy of Christmas, etc. – **Atheson**

T879

Friendship at Christmas – A friendly wish for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year – **Lee**

T880

Peaceful Morning – May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace, etc. – **Thomas**

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	T749	T850	T751	T852	T853	T854	T755	T856
	T857	T858	T859	T860	T861	T862	T863	T864
	T865	T866	T867	T768	T869	T870	T871	T872
	T873	T874	T875	T876	T877	T778	T879	T880
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FROM THE LEANIN' TREE . . . OUR 19th YEAR

SEEING IS NOT ALWAYS BELIEVING –BUT IT'S NOT FORGETTING, EITHER, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR!

"BLOOD FLINT" and GOLD

IT IS STRANGE to see a powerful adult—skilled builder, practical mechanic, and good man of the soil—turn from the ordinary conversation and motions of construction into a picture of terror. In seeing this I had the involuntary sensation of joining the victim—something like sympathetic yawning, but quicker and much more unnerving.

I saw the blood, or what I took to be blood, splatter over the rocks and planks yet even this seemed out of proportion to the transformation of the man before me. Hugo stood, feet wide apart, the handle of the heavy sledge hammer slipping from the tips of his thick fingers, his face ashen, mouth slack; and in his eyes the look of a man who was seeing over the rim of the world of reality.

Like so many experiences that leave their mark upon us, the events leading to this day were not out of the ordinary. My family and I had moved up to Little Round Top for a month's work on our new ranch house. We, being my wife and I, and as I recall the year, four children. Some time earlier we had determined the site and had cleared out an area on the *bluff* overlooking the creek and the bottom land. It was to be a "main" house and one built as nearly as possible from the materials at hand. This land was settled by my wife's people during the Republic of Texas days, and is located in the north edge of Williamson County and spans Salado Creek. It has had other owners, and now that we have managed to buy part of it back the great-great-grandchildren romp where they were intended to romp.

The construction of the house was to be of natural limestone from outcroppings near the house. There was still enough virgin timber for the wood requirements. But the floor became a problem and, as events developed, it was the floor which led to the unsettling experiences of that glaringly hot August afternoon.

My wife, our four children, and I were camped out amid all the trappings required for our stay, plus the tools and necessities for building. Our closest neighbor was located about two miles away "bee-line and pasture-wise." The road "in" was no more than a high ridge paralleling the east fence line and afforded the makings of a lane access which was seldom explored by Sunday drivers.

HUGO came to our camp one night leading in a friend of ours from south Texas who had lost his way and had stopped off for directions. Hugo sat for camp coffee and left us with the promise to return the next day with some "garden truck" which we might put to use. Our overnight visitor left

By BOB THOMAS

Illustrated by Larry Smitherman

early the next morning for Oklahoma and about noon Hugo was back with a generous supply of various vegetables to relieve the monotony of our camp diet.

I was laying off the house and trying to figure out drainage, shade, prevailing winds and the like. We talked quite awhile. Hugo was familiar with the place as he had grown up not too far away. He knew construction and before long I had engaged him to help with the building. We determined to pour a concrete floor and reinforced foundation suitable for the thick walls I had planned. The low side of the place represented a considerable fill problem so to provide a solid bed we decided to make use of the scattered flint rocks. We parted upon agreement to begin early the next morning.

Hugo, his oldest son Willie, and a relative named Dedrick made their appearance at good light. They brought considerable equipment, including a tractor and low-boy trailer. We split up into work teams. Willie and I went at the business of gathering suitable fill rock. Hugo and Dedrick set forms to be ready for the fill. Work went well. After lunch we rested, then began to stir around preparatory to resuming work—all of us were somewhat reluctant to leave the shade. I remember hoisting many heavy flint rocks on the low-boy during the morning and recall the weight, sweat and backache even now. We reached a point where the rock picking had to stop and let the leveling catch up. The bigger rocks had to be broken to fill the forms more evenly.

Hugo and Dedrick had been breaking rock at intervals during the miserably hot afternoon and were showing the weariness inherent to swinging a ten-pound sledge hammer. Willie and I spelled them. There is an art in doing even simple tasks, I suppose, because under Hugo's instruction I learned to let the weight of the hammer do the work and to aim my blows with some degree of accuracy. Hugo was enjoying his role as teacher—particularly from a sitting position. When I remarked that any man who knew that much about "busting" rock most likely had learned with a chain on his leg, I expected a good laugh from all but quite the contrary happened. I saw smiles fade to darkness on the two faces before me. I had indeed struck fire, but not from the flint.

No words were spoken however and both Hugo and Dedrick took over the sledges in turn while Willie and I went to the water barrel. Willie was as tall as his father but not as filled-out. He drank just a swallow or two and flung the remainder from the tin cup into the dust at my feet, and hung the cup rather than handing it to me as was customary.

The water barrel was on a wash bench against the trunk of a tree. In the lowest fork of the tree I had nailed a wooden box which I used to keep my lantern, funnel and a few hand tools out of reach of the kids. Nestled in that box was a .41 Colt. I weighed the incident with Willie as he moved on back to the forms. I had the idea that maybe my judgment of men was way off somehow and that I should show these gents the "Colt's nose" and move them on out. But all seemed to be going normally, and talk had resumed at the forms. I went on back to work, also.

Time passed and the atmosphere gradually became congenial with no hint of dark feelings. I was pleased with the progress of the work and was in an upstroke with the sledge when I heard my wife call to ask if we could stop for a few minutes. She was carrying a gallon jar of lemonade from the direction of the spring.

OUR WORK was done "by the day" and that meant from light to no light. We had at least two hours of work before supper. Hugo finished up his glass of lemonade, passed the glass back to the kids, took up his hammer, and stepped back over the form boards. The rest of us were in the process of following his lead when Hugo swung his hammer high over a big egg-shaped flint rock, seemed to aim the blow with care, and brought the sledge down with the full sweep of his long arms. The flint shattered with great force but with a sound closely akin to a wet dishrag dropped on the floor. What looked like blood splattered on the rocks and form boards.

I looked directly into Hugo's face and immediately wished that I hadn't. His eyes were wide with horror as if he had witnessed some terrible and irrevocable act. For a moment his panic transferred itself to me.

A voice, tense with concern and close at hand, brought me back to reality. The voice was Dedrick's asking, "Hugo, are you hurt bad?" Hugo seemed unable to divert his eyes from the red splotches before him. He gained voice and motion only when Dedrick grabbed his arm to support his sagging frame. "Der damn bloody rock!" Hugo muttered. "Der death sign!" There was no mistaking his words nor the depth of their meaning for him, still I was bent on the practical—the accident which I was certain had occurred. I was sure that Hugo was hurt, equally sure that a flint chip had hit him causing a squirting wound.

But Hugo was not hurt nor was anyone else of the group! Yet the blood-like splotches were there on the rocks and form boards. I tested the stuff between my fingers, and so did others—but not Hugo. He had stepped away from the forms and was obviously much shaken. His voice was thin as he once more pointed at the darkening stains and said, "A damn blood flint! A damn blood flint!"

With this and no more he made straight for his old pick-up and did not look back. Dedrick and Willie followed his lead with more apparent concern for Hugo than for the startling occurrence. They drove out of the pasture leaving all their tools and equipment scattered, even a hand saw which usually received careful attention.

You can be sure that I was more than upset over this day's "doings," as well as uneasy over what to expect from Hugo and his crew in the future. I determined to find out more about Hugo—building or no building. First, I wanted to know why I had spooked him earlier in the day with my remark about the chain on his leg, and I also wanted to know what he meant by the "bloody flint."

AFTER SUPPER and as my wife settled the kids down for the night, I took a light and strolled back over to look at that rock. The flint was a big one, about a foot and a half in diameter before being smashed. The inside of the shattered rock was flaky and rusty looking. The splattered up areas were dark-stained. I had never heard of a blood flint and could not begin to explain the natural phenomenon which could cause it, much less get in tune with the ominous portent—the death sign which Hugo read so clearly and which had turned

(Continued on page 63)

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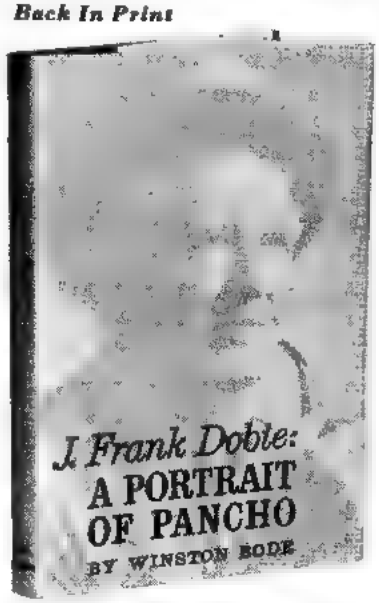

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If you have information concerning persons referred to below, do not write to us. Communicate directly with the letter writer.

Bryson

My father, Baron DeKalb Bryson, was born in Georgia (or one of the Carolinas) about 1840. He migrated to Yell County, Arkansas, shortly after the end of the War Between the States, possibly between 1866 and 1869. His wife, Mary, died childless and about 1885 he married my mother, who was the widow of a Mr. Lawrence by whom she had had one son, Charles Lawrence. My sister, Cora Bryson, was born in 1887 and I was born in 1889. I do not know my Grandfather Bryson's first name but either he or one of my uncles was named Joe Bryson.

I would very greatly appreciate any further information about Baron DeKalb Bryson and any of my Bryson ancestors. It will be a great act of kindness if anyone having any such information will write to me. Any and all mail will be answered and with a little love gift from me.—Joe Berry Bryson, 308 LeJeune Way, Birmingham, Alabama 35209

Trent

I would like information on any ancestors of my great-grandfather, Simon Doyle Trent, born in Maysville, Kentucky in 1839, the son of German Trent and Eliza Doyle.—(Mrs.) Marjorie Leighty, 6701 Carol Drive, Sebastopol, California 95472

Vernon Sylvester Isom

I would like some information on Vernon Sylvestor Isom, or he could have changed his name to Vernon Sylvestor Jones. He disappeared in 1920 from around Hamilton, Alabama. If he is still alive, he would be about seventy-five years old. Last heard from was Texas. Would like to hear from anyone who knows this man.—Monroe Roberts, 2417 North 30 Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68504

Charles R. Ross

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has any information concerning my brother, Charles R. Ross, who was supposed to have left the vicinity of Ukia, California, and went to Arizona. He would be about sixty-five years old, 5' 10" tall, about 165 pounds.—A. V. Wilkerson, c/o Veteran's Home, Yountville, California 94599

Lois Pryor or "Red" Rawlings?

I am in possession of a great many old letters with envelopes written late in the 1920s and in the early 1930s addressed to a Miss Lois Pryor of Rusk, Texas, who apparently was a school teacher. The letters were written by hopeful suitors. The largest number of letters were written from Johnson City, Texas, and are in personalized envelopes of W. H. Rawlings & Son, Johnson City, Texas, with a picture of an Angora goat in the upper left-hand corner of each envelope.

The letters are signed "Red" Rawlings and are headed *Rocksprings*, Texas. Some of the letters give the impression that the Rawlings Ranch was in the making and that a son "Red" was an agricultural instructor in the high school. I will appreciate any information from anyone who knows or remembers Lois Pryor or W. H. "Red" Rawlings.—A. J. Stanton, 902 Kickapoo Street, Jacksonville, Texas 75766

Elizabeth Marie Delaney

I'm looking for Elizabeth Marie Delaney. In 1932 she lived in Jersey City, N. J., and worked across the river in New York City as a telephone operator. She was born in 1910. In 1935 she married a Mr. Condon.—Charles H. Finkel, Box 43, Ely, Nevada 89301

Ping Family

I am working on a family tree and would be interested in corresponding with anyone who may have information about the name Ping. Ping may be a shortened form of some other family name, so I would like any thoughts or theories on this, also. If you have this prefix in your name, please write. Will reimburse your postage.—Mrs. Lloyd Blanton, P.O. Box 331, Ansonia, Ohio 45303

Dennis Yokum

Dennis (Daniel?) Yokum was from Dade County, Missouri, where he married Dolly West in 1830. After her death in Chico, California, he went to Texas. There he remarried at least once and twins John and Nora were born. I was told he went from Amarillo to Denton County or to Yoakum, Texas. Any information would be appreciated.—Mrs. Ed Barton, Route 3, Box 194, Chico, California 95926

Hutchings Family

My grandfather, Alvin H. Hutchings, married my grandmother, Carrie M. Meyers, in 1879 in Marshalltown, Iowa, and my father was born in 1882, also in Marshalltown. I don't know what happened to Grandfather Hutchings. My grandmother remarried (last name Dryden) and moved west to Montana in 1894. Does anyone know anything about Alvin or any of his brothers or sisters?—Warren D. Hutchings, Box 174, Tohatchi, New Mexico 87325

Dave Dudley

I am interested in the genealogy of Dave Dudley, who with Tom Wallace was killed by Indians near Adobe Walls in Palo Duro Canyon, 1874. (Ref: *Indian*

(Continued on page 69)

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Cavalryman Turned Rancher
(Continued from page 35)

scratching the bottom of the barrel, and doggedly determined not to fold.

Shoup accepted wheat, butter, vegetables, cattle, and oats from the settlers and credited it all to their accounts. Then he got out and made a market for as much of it as he could. His business contacts reached everywhere, and his pack trains delivered local produce to the full extent of supply and demand.

But the cattle business was a different thing. Herds had increased and their acceptance as a medium of exchange had expanded, too, so Shoup found he was acquiring more than he could possibly handle. He solved the problem by forming a partnership with two young men who had for years mined in the Leesburg, Silver Creek and Loon Creek areas during warm weather and clerked for Shoup in the winter.

The colonel financed the venture, but it was a sound, workable deal, and his new partners pitched in with a will. They set up headquarters on fresh range about ten miles from town, and the herd flourished for another three years. By then it was necessary to find more range, and they chose the upper Pahsimeroi River valley, about sixty miles south and west of Salmon City, and the nearby Little Post River country which spread out on the eastern side of the Pahsimeroi Mountains.

This eased the pressure for awhile, but the cattle continued to increase and there was still no outside market, so by 1876 the situation was critical.

Then the first break came—Shoup got a chance to sell some if he could get them to Chicago, a formidable task by any measure. About 800 steers were cut out from the Lost River herd, then trailed tortuously and slowly eastward to the Green River station in Wyoming where arrangements had been made with the Union Pacific Railroad for shipment. The trail hands were jubilant when the station was sighted, but they soon found that their troubles on the drive were nothing compared with what lay ahead.

There were little or no facilities for handling stock at that time, and the narrow-gauge cars would hold no more than twenty head. Getting those heavy old steers, as wild, mean and strong as grizzlies, into the small freight cars entailed one disaster after another. Men were hurt; steers were crippled and killed.

More grief and near-tragedy occurred each day during the long train ride, but eventually the shipment got to Chicago. And in spite of all the headache from range to market, the herd averaged 1400 pounds. Tops sold at four cents per pound, and the lowest at two and one-half cents per pound. On the debit side, there was $230 per car freight, plus wages for the cowboys.

And so a famous first was chalked up by Shoup—these were the first commercial cattle ever sent East from Idaho. During the same year, other owners made a drive of a thousand head from southwest Idaho to Cheyenne, Wyoming,

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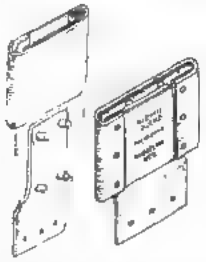

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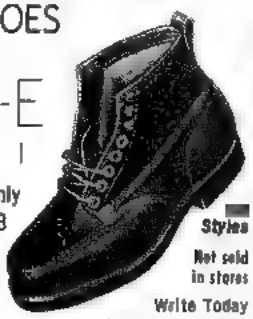

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Some of Shoup's cattle corralled on his homestead.

but they were ranged for two years before being sold.

WHEN a new town, Challis (about sixty miles south of Salmon City), was established during 1877 as a supply base for Bonanza and the rich mines being developed in the upper basin of the Yankee Fork of Salmon River, Shoup opened a general store in each town. The ice of the depression was broken, and during the years to follow, mule trains packed countless cargoes of Lemhi County produce and merchandise from Shoup's Salmon City store to the two new distribution points.

Just how readily the market was grasped was shown by the fact that at one time the county sold itself so short of butter that some had to be ordered from New York and shipped in via Corrinne, Utah.

In the midst of this boom, trouble of a worse nature was brewing. Bannock Indians, enraged by a series of events throughout Idaho Territory, began muttering about revenge and it seemed quite possible that open hostilities would erupt at any time. Some of the Bannocks had homes at the reservation on the Lemhi River, and Chief Tendoy, leader of the Lemhi Shoshone band, was powerless to keep them under control, even though he was well known as a friend of the whites. Tension held the townspeople and the outlying ranchers in an icy grip that summer.

Shoup's riders on the Pahsimeroi-Little Lost River ranges hadn't heard much about the trouble, and were going about their business as usual. Then one evening a cowboy returned to camp late and went straight to the foreman.

"Funny thing happened this afternoon," he said, "I was ridin' the north slope like ya' told me when I run onto a pile of fresh cow guts. I couldn't make out no tracks for sure, but while I was lookin' around I spotted a bunch of magpies flyin' and lightin' a piece up the mountain, so I went on up there. And they was eatin' on another pile."

As if tired from his unaccustomed long speech, the cowboy poured himself some coffee and took a deep pull before continuing, "'Fore I got done lookin' around I found five-six more piles. Reckon we got a nest a rustlers movin' in?"

"Don't sound like the way rustlers work," the foreman answered, "more like Indians I'd say. I'll have the men do some scoutin' around tomorrow and see what they come up with."

At daylight the next morning, riders left camp with the admonition, "Now don't go tryin' to be big heroes if you run into somethin'. Just keep out of trouble and report back to me," from their foreman.

Jim Briner and French Joe had been sent to the farthest range, and by the time they got there, their horses were pretty winded. Getting off on a high knoll to rest the animals, they walked over to look at the area beyond the rise and could hardly believe what they saw. They had stumbled onto a group of Bannocks butchering cattle just below them!

But the Indians had seen them first. Suddenly a rifle bullet spanged onto a rock right behind Joe, and both men hit the dust, rolling for cover. They were carrying guns as all riders did, and clearly there was no choice but to use them, orders or no orders. Each man fired a couple of times, hitting nothing but letting the Indians know they weren't completely helpless.

"Did ya' get a good look at any of them redskins?" Briner asked his partner as they strained their eyes watching the now-deserted ground below.

"Naw," he answered, "it all happened too fast."

"Wal, it didn't fer me," Briner stated. "They're Bannocks from Tendoy's reser-

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vation!"

Just then a bullet barely missed French Joe's head. Realizing that they were surrounded, Briner spun around in time to see an Indian dart toward a tree, and he snapped off a shot. The redskin lurched sideways as if he'd been hit broadside by a steer, fell hard, and then lay still.

"But that wasn't one of 'em," Briner said as he jacked in another shell.

All day the Indians kept the two cowboys pinned down on the knoll with sporadic shooting, and all day their beef butchering continued. The sun blazed without mercy, mingling sweat with dirt on the riders' faces, and their throats got so dry they felt like pine bark. It was a stalemate—the Indians couldn't slip up on the whites without making targets of themselves, nor could the white men move from their cramped positions. Briner kept up a tirade of oaths, raging mad at his helplessness, and even after he and French Joe had managed to slip away under cover of darkness that night, his anger didn't cease.

When Col. Shoup learned about the cattle slaughter he sent George Ellis, Jim Shoup, and Jim Sterns, an Indian, to warn all men on the ranges to avoid the hostiles.

"All the cows I own aren't important enough to justify risking one man's life," he said, "and besides, any shedding of blood on either side might be all that is needed to trigger a full-scale war, as touchy as this situation is."

Like all the other riders, Briner listened to the message. And then he walked slowly and deliberately up to Sterns with a message of his own.

"You tell every Bannock Injun on yer reservation that I know which of them was shootin' at me that day," he growled, "and no matter where, when, how, or under what conditions I ever see one of 'em again, he's a dead Injun. I'll kill him on the spot!"

Shortly after this, a detachment of troops sent from the post at Boise to scout over eastern Idaho, came across the mountains by way of Pahsimeroi and surprised an Indian party in the act of slaughtering cattle, captured them and took them to the Lemhi reservation. Shoup added pressure by issuing a formal protest to the agent, and before long the Bannocks left the Pahsimeroi country.

No one, of course, was fooled into thinking that the arrest or the warnings had anything to do with their leaving. It was much more likely that they quit simply because they had all the beef they wanted.

And on the other side, none of the guilty Lemhi Bannocks was fool enough to think that all was forgotten and forgiven by Briner. They knew him better than that. So for several years following that memorable day, they made it a point to keep close track of him, always knowing in just what section of country he was working. And they stayed out of it!

As with all other cattlemen in Idaho, good years and bad years continued to come to Shoup. He had never intended to get into the cattle business to begin with, but once in, he bowed his neck and eventually made it pay off.

Just as he had led his troops during the Civil War, Colonel Shoup led his people in the Salmon River area to a prosperous future. And, as if to insure its permanence, he then went on to become Idaho's last Territorial governor, Idaho's first elected state governor, and finally, a senator in Washington, D.C.

George L. Shoup was as dedicated, as efficient and as equally at home behind the polished mahogany desk in his District of Columbia office as he had been behind the teams of oxen on his freight wagons. He rode a leather swivel chair with the same ease he had ridden a cavalry saddle and a western stock saddle. Rich men, poor men, politicians and Indians all claimed him as their friend, and he never in his lifetime let any of them down.

He fought for better markets and greater security for his people, for honest and fair treatment for the Indians, and for justice for all men alike. But no fight in his life was harder won than the cavalry colonel's battle for cows in gold country.

The Buried Mercury

(Continued from page 20)

to understand the words to realize his warning. The ledge rocked crazily beneath their feet. Indeed, the entire cliff threatened to give way.

Mormon Jim yelled at the Navajo to

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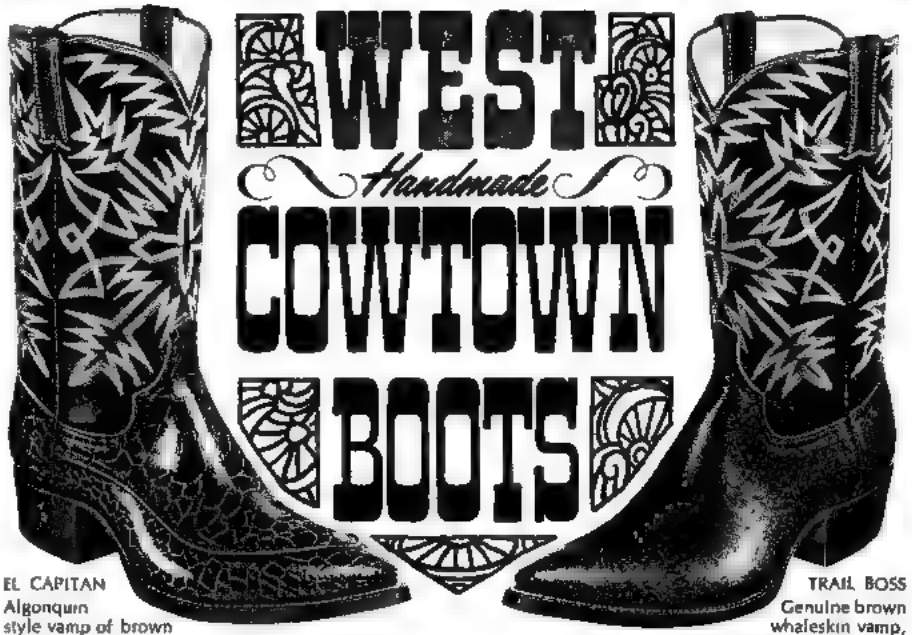

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come out and said to Campbell, "Let's go while there's time!"

As he gained the break onto the plateau in the lead, Mormon Jim was hurled forward. The mass of solid stone seemed to explode in all directions. A great roar rumbled through the air and mighty rocks tumbled around. Most of the mass slid off onto the sandy floor at the base. It was Mormon Jim's expressed belief, later, that the enormous weight of the cliff had been suspended in space, eroding steadily. Suddenly it had reached the point where any weight moved to the edge could overbalance the whole mass.

When Mormon Jim could breathe again he got to his feet shakily. His clothing was torn and he bled in many places where sharp stones had cut his skin.

Under a pile of rocks he saw parts of Campbell's clothing. Hardly expecting he could have survived, Mormon Jim uncovered the broken body. To his amazement Campbell still breathed. Mormon Jim dragged him out to camp on his coat.

There was no need to look for their poor Navajo friend. He had gone over while still inside the cave. The contents along with him now lay under a few hundred thousand tons of rock.

After Campbell's left leg had been splinted with cedar limbs, Mormon Jim collapsed. For the balance of the day and that night both men remained in a state of shock, stunned by the catastrophe. The next morning they set forth, riding at a walk by easy stages, toward Halfway House below present Cameron on the Little Colorado River. From there Campbell was hauled to town in a freight wagon.

MANY THINGS in their story puzzled Cole. They had found ten pipes of mercury whereas records showed only six had been stolen. The additional four must have been filled and transported south prior to the main haul. Yet why had they gone to the extra and difficult task of hauling the pipes onto Kaibeto Plateau to cache in a cave? In many ways this part of the theft didn't make [illegible].

Cole kept mulling over the situation until 1909, when to satisfy his curiosity, he went to Bitter Springs to examine the so-called skid marks. Cole could not find any.

In March, because of a late snowstorm, Cole took refuge with the Navajo Salawa family in their hogan near Collins Sink. The old man had been an agency policeman for five years, hence the name "Salawa." He spoke broken English.

When the storm lifted and Cole prepared to leave, Salawa said, "Got me cornfield down the wash in the sand. Below my farm there been old pipe buried in the ground. Stuff too heavy for several men to lift. What you reckon for, mebbyso?"

Replying that he didn't know, Cole went on after leaving some of his extra food as a present. On the ride down Hamblin Wash Cole began wondering about the pipes. It occurred to him that those in the cliff cave may not have been under the great fall after all. Maybe somehow they fell outside of the mass or were only partly covered.

Deciding to investigate he drew off into the mesa swale below the Salawa cornfield. There was nothing whatever in the nature of a giant rock slide from above. Moving on a mile or so he began hunting along the cliff base. The second day about noon, a fierce sandstorm blew in very suddenly. There was very little visibility when he found the pipe ends exposed in a sandpile at the foot of the wall.

After the storm ended Cole went on down to Flagstaff. Discreet inquiries were made and he consulted an attorney. The conclusion was that he probably would experience no trouble in claiming the mercury.

Campbell was no longer around but Mormon Jim happened to be in from a prospecting trip. He joined Cole, at the latter's request, but shook his head dubiously over what seemed the mystery of two caches. With a wagon and team the two men sought the regular cast-iron flasks used to transport seventy-six pounds of mercury. Only eleven could be found. By using them they could drain the pipes and more easily handle the metal. The two men were so anxious that they pulled out without waiting for more flasks to be shipped in.

Cole's former campsite was found without difficulty. From there they drove the wagon across the sand dunes, halting at the base of the cliffs.

The following morning they set forth confidently to locate the find. The spot where Cole believed it to be was covered by a large sand dune. Three cuts into it divulged nothing. Several other nearby places were searched—still nothing. Cole grew so frantic and confused that he could hardly discuss the matter.

Up to a certain point he *knew*. It was only after the storm had blotted out the world that he had become turned around and could not be certain. The same storm, most likely, had moved dunes and covered flats. The site Cole had excavated might now rest under many feet of sand.

After a long month of failure both men were worn out and returned to Flagstaff. In later years, periodically, as late as 1930, Mormon Jim made other attempts alone.

The mercury-filled pipes remain somewhere along the base of Echo Cliffs. Maybe those Cole found were the ones discovered by Mormon Jim and his friends in the high cave. They could have fallen clear of the slide. In the last years of his life Mormon Jim grew convinced this was what had happened.

Today only two men possess sufficient knowledge to search for the mercury. Their opinion regarding it is the same as Mormon Jim's. The sand keeps moving all along Hamblin Wash. It has destroyed the once fertile farming land. The wind funnels down along the cliffs for many miles. Perhaps some day it will blow away the concealing cover of a fortune in mercury.

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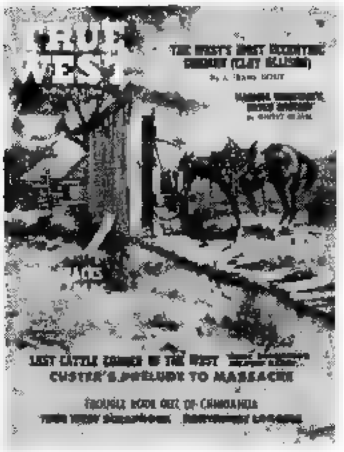

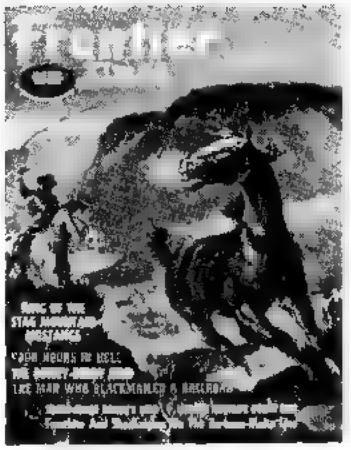

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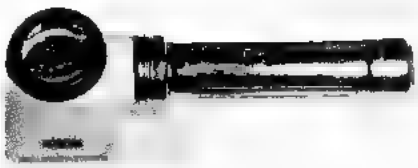

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Phantom Message from Cayuga Springs

(Continued from page 25)

When the Civil War broke out, Splitlog became a soldier in the Union Army. After its conclusion and at the urging of some of his friends already there, Mathias Splitlog journeyed to the Indian Territory. Traveling to Fort Scott, Kansas, and crossing the Quapaw country, he came to the running streams and the wooded hills of the Seneca lands, and he liked what he saw. In 1874 he sold the remainder of his holdings in Kansas and moved to Indian Territory. He chose as his home an area near the Cowskin and the Grand Rivers. There was a large spring on his land, which he named "Cayuga" in remembrance of a boat he had owned as a young man on Lake Michigan. The settlement which grew up around the spring was known as Cayuga Springs.

A pioneer on four frontiers—Ohio, Kansas, Missouri and Indian Territory—Mathias Splitlog, the Cayuga-French-Wyandot-Seneca always carried a vision. He could sense the potential of the countries in which he pioneered. This uncanny business acumen made Splitlog wealthy, by the standards of the times.

ONE of the first enterprises established by Splitlog in Indian Territory was the installation of a sawmill, to tap the millions of board-feet of virgin timber which surrounded his homestead. He built a grist mill, as he had done years before when he established the first grist mill in Kansas. He put in a ferry. He built a general store. His sound business knowledge, his inventive turn of mind and his weird ability to estimate the future led him into divers endeavors.

Machinery for the Splitlog enterprises had to be shipped by rail to Fort Scott, Kansas and freighted by ox-team from there to Cayuga Springs. When the railroad was extended to Baxter Springs, this became the receiving point for Splitlog's freight.

Mathias built a fine home which was embellished with cupolas and, as was the style of the era, a plentiful amount of architectural "gingerbread." The buildings were painted a dazzling white, as was the neat wooden fence which surrounded the homestead. After the house was completed, Splitlog moved his family from Kansas.

In his continued efforts to make his community as self-sufficient as possible, Splitlog kept adding various services. He built a well equipped blacksmith shop to keep the machinery of his other businesses in operating condition. There were no schools, so Splitlog organized a subscription school, furnished a building, and allowed the teacher to retain all that she collected. A long-time native of the area recalls that her family paid five cents per day for her schooling.

After the other businesses were in successful operation, Splitlog started construction of a large factory which, when completed, contained three stories and a basement. Here he began the manufacture of wagons, buggies and two-seated hacks. All of the wooden parts for the vehicles came from Splitlog's own sawmill. This same factory manufactured coffins. These were made from well seasoned walnut, of which there was always an ample supply. When there was a death in the community, all other work at the factory ceased while Splitlog's craftsmen built the coffin. Most of the time the clothing for the deceased came from the Splitlog store. The majority of those who died were buried completely at the expense of Mathias Splitlog.

The post office of Cayuga Springs was established in June, 1884, with Joseph Splitlog, one of Mathias' sons, as the first postmaster. It was about this time that the far-seeing Splitlog discerned that the days of the hack and the horse were numbered, and that if Cayuga was to continue to develop it must have a railroad.

Enlisting the aid of friends, and pouring his own wealth and energy into the project, Splitlog promoted the three-million-dollar "Splitlog Line" from Joplin, Missouri to Neosho, Missouri, thence to Splitlog City. Begun in 1887, the line was completed in 1889 and later became a portion of the far-flung Kansas City Southern system.

At the time of the completion of the line into Splitlog City, Mathias made a speech. This man who could neither read nor write but who spoke seven languages, said, "I go on. I make Cayuga and Splitlog biggest towns in Ozarks." But suckered into a fake gold mining scheme, Splitlog, as well as many of his friends, lost heavily, and the promised railroad to Cayuga was indefinitely postponed. In fact, it was never completed.

In 1890 Splitlog was elected Chief of the Senecas. The day of the election he gave a feast for his friends and fellow tribesmen. Fifteen hundred loaves of bread were hauled from the bakery at Southwest City, Missouri. Three beeves were prepared to feed the multitude. The Indian band, which was organized, outfitted and sponsored by Splitlog, lent a festive air to the occasion.

As Seneca Chief, Splitlog made several trips to Washington, D.C. in the interest of the tribe, and all of the trips were at his own expense. Although there were some who opposed Splitlog as chief, because he was part white, the majority of the Senecas and the Wyandots supported him. Wiser members of the tribe realized that Splitlog was the only person who was financially able to bear the duties of chief. A letter of introduction written by George S. Doane, Indian Agent, introduced Splitlog thusly: "Matthias Splitlog, Chief of the Seneca Tribe of Indians, the bearer of this letter, is one of the most progressive Indians and his word can be strictly relied on."

ALTHOUGH SPLITLOG was a Catholic, having been baptized as a baby, it was not until Father Ketcham came to the Indian Territory that Splitlog evinced any great interest in religion. He had for years provided a meeting place for those who wished to worship, but he never took part in the services. His wife, Eliza

Splitlog, was a devout Quaker.

After Splitlog's meeting with Ketcham they became fast friends, and Father Ketcham spent many pleasant evenings as a guest in the Splitlog home. Splitlog, though an accomplished linguist, most enjoyed the French language, and it was in this language that the two diverse individuals conversed. Father Ketcham was highly educated, and Splitlog had no formal education, but the two formed a friendship which lasted for years.

Father Ketcham was one of the chief factors in the changing of the religious habits of the Splitlog family. Mrs. Splitlog became a convert and twelve Splitlog baptisms were recorded in the five years Father Ketcham spent at Muskogee. Mathias was confirmed by Rev. Theophile Meerschaert, Vicar-Apostolic of the Indian Territory, on November 26, 1893.

It was about this time that Splitlog conceived the idea of buying a bell to call the people to worship. Father Ketcham explained to Splitlog that the bell would be blessed, and that there was no building worthy of the bell. Perhaps it was as a monument to his wife that Splitlog engendered the notion of building a church. His wife was incurably ill, and his mind was searching for some fitting tribute to her memory.

Plans for the church were drawn by Splitlog and Father Ketcham, though many of the ideas incorporated in the construction were peculiarly Splitlog's own. Constructed of hewn limestone, from the area, the inside was embellished with beautifully hand-carved imported woods. Starting at the right front window, and proceeding in a counter-clockwise route, the name "Splitlog" is spelled out, one letter over each arched stained-glass window. The arch forming the doorway is formed of fifteen stones, each of which is carved with an Indian symbol. None of Splitlog's descendents are able to decipher the meaning of the symbols.

The building of the church had begun in 1883, but it was still unfinished when Eliza Splitlog died. Nonetheless, the funeral was held in the partially completed building. Improvised seats for the mourners, and a handmade rubbed walnut coffin from Splitlog's own factory, were hallmarks of the funeral.

Work continued on the church, with several interruptions when Splitlog had to journey to Washington, D.C. on tribal business. The building was practically completed on November 25, 1896, when it was dedicated. It was blessed by Bishop Meerschaert and by Father Ketcham. Father Versavel, who also attended the dedication, recorded in his private diary, "More than 5000 [?] were on the grounds. More than 100 of them were Catholics. The people were carried away with the grand ceremony and the music." The bronze bell, which had been cast in Belgium, first tolled in memory of Eliza Splitlog, during the dedication.

This is the only church in Oklahoma, and perhaps in the United States, which was built solely by an Indian, from his own funds, for the religious use of all people.

Splitlog was now eighty-five years of

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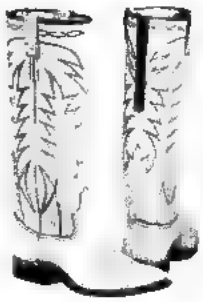

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Upper Piedra River area where the gold bullion was hidden.

age, and the shadows of his life were growing longer and longer. It was on December 22, 1896, that Splitlog again started a journey to Washington on behalf of his adopted people. On the way he sickened, and soon after he arrived in the capital city, he developed pneumonia and died soon thereafter. His body was returned to Cayuga, where Requiem Mass was said on January 14 in the church the old man had dreamed, financed and built.

Mathias Splitlog was buried beside his wife a few hundred feet from the Cayuga mission. Almost single-handedly Splitlog had hammered a wilderness into a progressive, civilized way of life.

Today the old mission bell still rings. It calls the faithful to worship. Loud and clear, its clarion call peals over the streams and valleys of what was once the Seneca Nation.

The Utes' Ten Sacks of Gold

(Continued from page 9)

in that *sanja* (ditch). It was just a short, little gully that rain water had cut in a bank. It was so narrow that those sacks of gold fit into the bottom of it very tightly. It was not very deep, either—about like this," holding his hands a couple of feet above the ground.

"We left the gold there, and the storm waters washed dirt over the gold and covered it all up. And it is still there to this day. I know because quite often I go by there to see. Many men have hunted for that spot but none of them found it. They have not dug in the right place."

THE MOST ADROIT quizzing could never elicit more specific information about the location of the "right place" from that astute old Indian. His reply was always the same, "Over there where the Stollsteimer runs into the Piedra, nearby," and that general designation could cover a sizeable section of Archuleta County.

Old Washington died peacefully as he sat asleep at the base of a big pine tree on his allotment along the Stollsteimer. It was about the time of the First World War. His age was estimated to be 110 years, and with his passing went one of the last human beings who had accurate, personal knowledge of the secret hiding place of a fabulous golden treasure.

But there was a time when there was one white man in the San Juan country who could have found that spot and could have taken the gold out of it—if. While that is not a big "if," it is an important one.

About 1890 a man drifted into the San Juan country and spent a part of the summer visiting a family by the name of Cooper. The Coopers had a farm and were running a few cattle somewhere in the Pine River Valley near the present town of Bayfield. Their visitor was Slim Carven or Cowen; the exact pronunciation of his last name is a little uncertain because of differences in the memories of old settlers who knew the fellow. Carven seems to be the most generally accepted one. The man himself was not a man of mystery and made no secret of what his name was, but he did not mingle a great deal with the local folk.

Carven was about sixty or sixty-five years of age although he appeared twenty years younger. He was slender, of medium height, boyish in appearance, active, and agile. His face was as smooth as that of a schoolboy. He helped the Coopers on the farm and on occasion rode after their cattle. He was not hunting for anything while staying with the Coopers; he was just visiting them.

One afternoon, some two or three weeks after Slim Carven had arrived at the ranch and had had time to become familiar with the countryside, he startled Sam Cooper and a couple of other men visiting at the Cooper ranch with the remark, "I made a trip through this country nigh onto forty years ago."

"Why, man, there weren't any people livin' in this country at that time."

"There weren't no white folks, but there wuz lots of Indians."

His listeners wanted to hear more, so Carven related how he and his four partners had left California, bound for Santa Fe and the main trail east, with a string of seven mules, five of which were loaded with gold; how they forded the Colorado River at Moab, and then proceeded into the San Juan country; how they had crossed the Pine River not far from the Cooper farm, and had headed into the Ignacio Mountains. So far his account of their trip across the San Juan country agreed with that given by the Utes, as narrated by Washington and other old Indians of the tribe. The stories agreed up to the time that the white men encountered the isolated Indian camp in the little valley—and even after that point the stories still agreed as to the events which took place, but varied widely on interpretation of those

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events.

"How much gold did you say you had?" interposed one of his listeners.

"Five muleloads of the stuff—between 650 and 700 pounds."

"Where did you get so much gold all at one time, and how did you get it, huh?"

Carven parried a direct answer to the question. "We got the gold, never mind how, and we headed down through this here country so as to avoid havin' inquisitive company along the way. We wuz sorta unsocial at that particular time."

"And how long ago did you say it was?" another listener wanted to know again.

"Nigh onto forty years."

"That don't seem possible. You don't look to be a day over forty right now. It don't look like you've ever even shaved yet."

"I haven't. I've never shaved in my life. I am a sort of freak. I don't grow whiskers."

Naked Face!

"Well, get back to your story," jokingly remarked Cooper. "We want to hear the rest of the yarn."

"AIN'T THERE some tall, sharp rocks settin' on top of a long, high ridge over the other side of the divide yonder?" asked Carven, and indicated the divide between the Pine and the Piedra watersheds later named Ignacio Mountains. "Ain't no other rocks like 'em in the whole country."

"Yes. Them's the Chimney Rocks over on the divide between Stollsteimer and the Piedra."

"Then I am right and this is the place. We crossed the Pine down below here and follered up a little canyon to the top of the divide over yonder. Jest over the top of the ridge we ran onto an Indian camp. It was jest a small camp—only three or four tepees bunched together in a little park up there. We ran onto that camp kinda sudden like. We were jest as surprised as the Indians was. No bucks at the camp, just squaws and kids. When the squaws saw us they let out a devil of a squawl, and them and the kids took to the oak brush on the run.

"They didn't need to run. We wasn't going to do them no harm. Trouble was the last thing in the world we wanted just then. We was goin' to ride right on by the camp and not pay no 'tention to it, but the squaws had left some meat cookin' by the fire when they ran away, and the Indians had a lot of other meat a-hangin' around there. Us fellows had been a runnin' on short rations for several days—we hadn't seen no game to kill, and we was purty hungry—and gosh, that meat shore smelled good. We decided to take some of it along with us. There was nobody there to object, and the Indians had plenty. We didn't figger that they'd mind sharin' up a little bit. Specially when nobody wuz there to say no.

"Me and one of the other fellers stopped to gather up the grub while the rest of the bunch went on with the mules.

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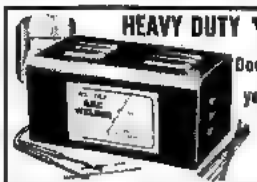

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Readers say when they pull TRUE WEST, OLD WEST and FRONTIER TIMES out, every copy sells as long as they keep them from being covered. Thankyee, Podner!

We got some of the meat, not very much, and some bread, and it didn't take us long to do it, but in the meantime the other boys was going out of sight around a turn in the valley, and we was gettin' a bit nervous. Too nervous, I guess, 'cause when I went to get on my horse, with a bunch of that grub in one hand, he shied away from me and I had a little trouble in mountin' him. In the ruckus we knocked one of those tepees over—jest knocked it over was all, we didn't mess up the camp any.

"Twouldn't amount to nothin' to set that tepee back up again, but we didn't take time for that. We figgered the Indians could do that, and that they would pay no attention to such a little chore. It was while we was goin' down the draw after we got the meat from the Indian camp that I saw them sharp rocks on that high ridge, and I saw 'em again several times the next day as I was gettin' out of the country, and I ain't never forgot 'em.

"We went on down to the main river [the Piedra] to camp that night. It was gettin' kinda dark by the time we got there, and we scouted around a bit to find a suitable campground. It was a beautiful valley there, and lots of grass —jest like a meadow. I remember we camped on an open bench where there was a sort of bank jest back of our camp, and oakbrush skirting part way around the flat, to make it easier to watch our horses during the night. We had a good supper on Indian venison. And that came mighty near bein' my last supper on earth. It was the last supper fer my four partners.

"The redskins, damn 'em, attacked us by surprise, jest afore sunup next morning. They killed the four boys right in the camp, and the only reason they didn't get me too is that I was about 200 yards away driving the horses and mules up to the camp.

"I heered the shots and the war whoops when the Indians attacked and I watched my partners fall. It didn't take me no time to realize what had happened. The sudden racket stampeded the horses. They whirled and started to run away, and I run, too—run for the oakbrush on the edge of that flat. I never went faster in my life. I had about forty yards to cover and it didn't take me long to make it. I expected to get shot on the way, or to hear them cussed Indians chasin' me, but nothin' happened. Mebbe they didn't see me. Anyhow, I got away. And I kept agoin'. I couldn't do my partners no good—they was already dead, and I didn't have no gun with me except my pistol, and only a little ammunition fer it. The Indians were still makin' a lot of racket back at our camp.

"I was runnin' through the brush as fast as I could when I stumbled over a sharp rock stickin' up about a foot out of the ground. I remember that rock mighty well, 'cause I skinned my shin purty bad when I stumbled on it, and my pistol flew out of its scabbard and landed on the open ground at the edge of the patch of brush. That sore shin bothered me for several days. I was afraid the Indians would see me when I picked my pistol up, but I guess they didn't. None of 'em ever caught up with me, anyway.

"I don't know whatever happened to our camp, to the horses and mules or to the gold. I didn't stay to see. I was left afoot and could do nothin' with any of it anyhow. Of course, the Indians would take the horses and the saddles. And they'd take the camp outfit too, or would burn it up. They wouldn't want the gold. They had no use for that. But they'd carry it off and throw it away somewhere, and the Lord only knows where.

"I made my getaway while I was able, and I ain't ever been back to that place since. I'm going to ride over there some day, afore I leave here, and look around. I had some purty tough goin' gettin' out of this country then, but I finally made it out to a Mexican settlement called Abuquiu over on the Rio Grande. Later on I went on down to Santa Fe, but I never told nobody about what had happened, and I didn't make no fuss about it either. I didn't want nobody to know about that gold. I had already had trouble enough, and there was men in authority back in California at that time that would have been mighty glad to hear something about that bullion, and would have made it purty hot for me. So I kept my mouth shet.

"But you wouldn't think them Indians would've got so mad about a little grub and an upset tepee, now, would you?"

COOPER and the other men who had heard Carven's story allowed as how "Indians behaved purty strange" sometimes but that their actions on this occasion were quite extraordinary. Had these men known the Indian version of the story, they would not have thought the savages had acted so strangely. But none of the Anglo settlers had ever heard the Indian side of the yarn, although it was, even then, common knowledge among the Mexican folk of the region.

No one doubted the truthfulness of Carven's story, but when he rode over onto the Piedra a few days later and wanted Cooper to go with him, the rancher could not get away. Carven went alone.

When he returned that evening he told Cooper, "I found the place all right, and I saw those Chimney Rocks agin, and there hain't no mistake about them being the same rocks I saw forty years ago. We camped down at the point of the ridge them rocks is on. Of course, there was nuthin' right on the spot to show jest where our camp was, no ashes, no bones, no gold, no nothin'—but I knew I found it 'cause I found the rock I skinned my shin on. It was still stickin' up out of the ground in that clump of brush, and I know our camp was on the upper end of that little flat that brush wuz on, not more'n 300 yards from that rock. I'm namin' that rock 'The Monument to my Lost Fortune,' cause it was there that I lost my gold."

Carven did not know it, but he was within 100 feet of his lost fortune, possibly nearer than that. Maybe he even walked over the top of it while he was

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scouting around his campsite that day. Old Washington said the Indians dumped it into a shallow ravine not more than 100 feet from the camp—but Carven didn't know that.

After a few more days spent with the Coopers, Carven moved on to other parts. Like others who had lived on the frontier many years, he was a restless soul and was always hunting for the "greener grass just over the mountain." No one in that area ever saw him again, although a few years later, Cooper and his neighbors who knew about Carven's adventure tried mighty hard to find him.

IT WAS ten or twelve years after Carven had visited the Coopers and had told his story before the Anglos had become friendly enough with the Mexicans to swap stories and had heard from them the Indian version of the yarn.

The Indian story and Carven's account dovetailed too perfectly to be just coincidence; and the fact that, according to the Indians, the one man in the group who had got away alive had no whiskers, was even more persuasive. It took both of the versions to make the story complete; and the two of them, when put together, told where to find that fabulous fortune in gold bullion.

The Indians had thrown the gold into a ravine about 100 feet from the camp, and Carven had definitely located that old camp within a very small area by finding the unmistakable landmark, the rock over which he had stumbled when he was making his escape.

And so the buried gold is still buried somewhere on the Piedra near the mouth of the Stollsteimer, waiting for some lucky person to come along and find it. And that discovery can happen almost any time. Natural floodwaters cut that little ravine there in the first place and then washed the dirt over those sacks of bullion, so the water can, when natural conditions are right again, wash that covering of earth off.

If you are ever out Piedra-way near the mouth of the Stollsteimer be sure to take a careful look into all the little ravines you cross. It could be a $400,000 look.

SEQUEL

Temple H. Cornelius commented in "Letters to the Editor" of the Durango *News* about Page Wright, 104-year-old Indian of Southern Ute Tribe, and a story about him in the October 9, 1955 issue:

"Page Wright was a real old-timer in the San Juan. He was the only living person who knew from actual first-hand information the exact location of the famous Stewart Placer and the spot where the Utes dumped five mule-loads of bullion on the Piedra River somewhere below Chimney Rock.

"The Utes killed four white men on their way from California with ten bags of gold bars. The Utes took the horses and mules and such other stuff as they wanted of the white men and hid the gold for which they had no use.

"In 1896 Dick Keller was the assayer at Durango Smelter when an old Ute Indian and his squaw came to the office with a bright metal bar about one inch square and six inches long. He pointed to the bar and demanded, 'You makeum money.' The assayers were busy and ordered the Indians away. This could have been some of the gold from Chimney Rock area."

Billy With a Gun

(Continued from page 17)

purely political organization became a masked, night-riding outfit that robbed, stole, hanged their enemies and terrorized San Miguel County in general.

Thanks to this development, Billy quit the outfit cold. This earned him some none too genteel enemies, especially after he declared himself bluntly and openly on the side of law and order.

ONE MORNING he found an anonymous note poked under the door of his restaurant. With Spanish-Americans dominating local politics, the note's three words were naturally in Spanish: *"Cuidado, chivo traidor!"* ("Look out, you so-and-so traitor!")

Billy Green buckled on his six-shooter and began keeping a wary eye open for trouble. Old Town was the county seat and the stronghold of political power and monkey-business. Hardly a week passed without a robbery, murder or some other form of lawlessness. Night after night masked riders stormed up and down Bridge Street in an arrogant display of power. Sometimes of a morning Billy

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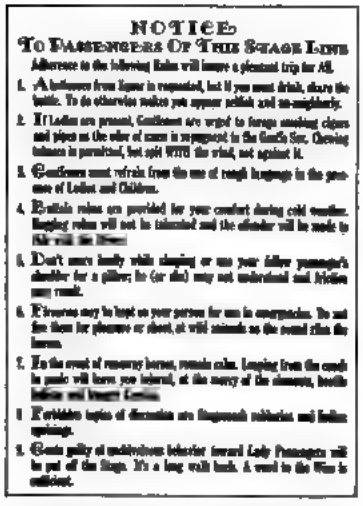
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Green could step out of his little hash house and see the body of some enemy of the night-riders swinging by a rope from a girder of the ornate steel bridge over the Rio Gallinas—and nobody did anything about it.

Among those who did nothing about it was the San Miguel County sheriff, Lorenzo López. As Blake remembered him, Don Lorenzo was a pleasant, friendly, family-loving man, maybe a little pompous in his bearing, but personally well liked in the community. Though probably not a participant in the nefarious goings-on, such was the power of organized outlawry that he generally chose not to get into too much trouble by opposing it. Such a situation was not so very unusual in the politics of wild and wooly New Mexico Territory at that time.

As a weapon against too much *laissez faire* by sheriffs, a law somehow got enacted which empowered justices of the peace to bypass both sheriffs and town marshals by issuing warrants for arrest and appointing their own deputies.

Justice of the Peace Wooster of East Las Vegas was a tough old ex-forty-niner with a bristle to his whiskers. Neck-bowed and bushy-tailed, he decided to put the new law to work. When he began looking around for a man with enough guts and gun-savvy to serve his warrants, he picked Billy Green; and he found the cowboy-restaurant keeper with his gun already oiled.

"DEAD OR ALIVE," Wooster's warrants read. On his first mission as deputy, Billy Green came back from an outlaw hideout in the hills with bullet holes in his hat and shirt and two dead bodies lashed on his packhorse, thus saving the bristly judge the bother of a trial. From his next excursion on behalf of law, order and Judge Wooster, Billy checked in with one dead and two alive.

"This one," he explained to the judge, indicating the corpse, "seemed to hanker for a little shootin' match, so I had to accommodate him."

Actually Judge Wooster had no legal jurisdiction in West Las Vegas or the outside precincts, but when he issued a warrant for a notorious citizen of Old Town for sticking up a New Town merchant and beating him over the head with a pistol, Special Deputy Green ignored such technicalities. He made the arrest in an Old Town *cantina* in the presence of a dozen of the wanted man's friends, most of them armed.

"Billy's system was plumb simple," my brother-in-law told me with a chuckle. "He just calmly walked in and offered to swap bullets with anybody who felt like trying to stop him. Nobody did. Foolhardy? Sure, but it also took cold courage to make such an arrest and to march his prisoner down Bridge Street and across the bridge into Judge Wooster's legal jurisdiction. That kind of doins' added quite a bit to Billy Green's reputation as a dangerous man to monkey with."

Apparently it also inspired Old Town to try to even up the score. A warrant for the arrest of William Green on a charge of murder was issued by the Old Town Justice of the Peace, and a whole flock of special deputies got appointed to make the arrest. In the office of his *Stock Grower and Farmer* across Bridge Street from Billy's restaurant, Elwyn Blake somehow got wind of the warrant in time to warn Billy what was up. Blake took a good look up and down Bridge Street, then hurried across to the restaurant.

"Billy," Blake told him, "they don't aim to arrest you. They plan to come by night, four or five or more of them, shoot you down, then claim you resisted legal arrest."

"Well, thanks for the news," grinned the cowboy. "You reckon I'd better hire me a bodyguard?"

On Blake's advice, Billy went to a comparative newcomer for advice. The newcomer was Federal District Judge Smith, recently appointed by President Cleveland.

"As you well know," Judge Smith told him, "such a J.P. warrant is now legal in this Territory. If they come for you by day, and it appears that you have to do so without risk of injury, I advise you to submit. I'll see to it that there will be a sufficient force of reliable armed men nearby to get you safe to jail, and that your hearing will be fairly conducted. But if they come by night or show signs of opening fire—well, it is not a part of my judicial duty to advise a man to commit suicide. Are you well supplied with cartridges?"

"Likely more than I'll need," Billy assured him.

AS IT TURNED OUT, he was right about that. His enemies didn't waste much time. That evening Billy tried to send his wife to visit friends in New Town, but she wouldn't leave him. Neither would his younger brother. Mrs. Green was in the kitchen while Billy, Billy's brother, and a Spanish-American friend were eating supper, when five or six *hombres* showed up at the front door. Billy called to them that the restaurant was closed, although the front door was not locked.

"We come not to eat," the leading *pistolero* shouted back in Spanish. "We are officers of the law with a warrant for your arrest!"

"Come back *mañana, compadre,*" Bill advised him, turning his chair toward the door but not getting up. "I'll still be here!"

At that point, either pushed or on his own steam, the *pistolero* came barreling through the door with his pistol drawn. In his office across the street Elwyn Blake heard shots. Running outside, he saw one man down at the restaurant door, another staggering into the gutter, and four or five more getting away from the door in a hurry.

By the time Blake got across the street, Bridge Street was swarming with a mob of fifty or more armed men, many of them masked. When Blake called in from the door, Billy answered from the kitchen:

"Looks like the fun has started, Blake. You'd better keep out of it!"

"Your wife in there, Billy?"

"I sure am!" It was Mrs. Green herself who answered. "And I am going to stay here and help Billy fight them! But you keep out of it, Mr. Blake!"

The dark, wiry little editor had other ideas. He had, in fact already taken certain measures.

"Tom Clay (then town marshal of New Town) has fifty armed men under the bridge," he called to the Greens. "Judge Smith wants him to avoid a pitched battle if possible, but he don't aim to have you lynched, either."

"I'd better skin my own wolf!" Bill answered. "I've got plenty cartridges!"

"You stay where you are!" Blake's vehemence made it a command. "I'm unarmed, Billy. These hooligans are holdin' a powwow a piece up the street, but they won't hold off long. They won't pay no attention to me without a gun. I'll lock this front door as I go out, and get word to Clay to be ready if he hears a shot. If any of these mobsters start bustin' in, you start shootin' and hold out till Clay gets here if you can. Meantime I'll see if I can phone Judge Smith. Now promise me you'll stay put!"

Billy Green was by nature a fighter, but Blake was an old and trusted friend. Both Billy's brother and their Spanish friend strongly supported Blake's advice. Reluctantly Billy promised.

That promise narrowly missed costing his and his companions' lives in another way. By the time Blake got back from alerting Tom Clay, some of the mob were shouting, *Quémalo!* "Burn him out!" A man came running with a can of kerosene. Blake spied Sheriff López in the crowd and battled his way to him through kicks and curses.

"Look, Don Lorenzo," Blake urged the sheriff, "you're an officer of the law! You can't permit this!"

"Then let Green come out and surrender!"

"Surrender hell! You know they'd shoot him down!"

"The *chivo* has killed two officers of the law," shrugged the sheriff. "If he dies resisting arrest—"

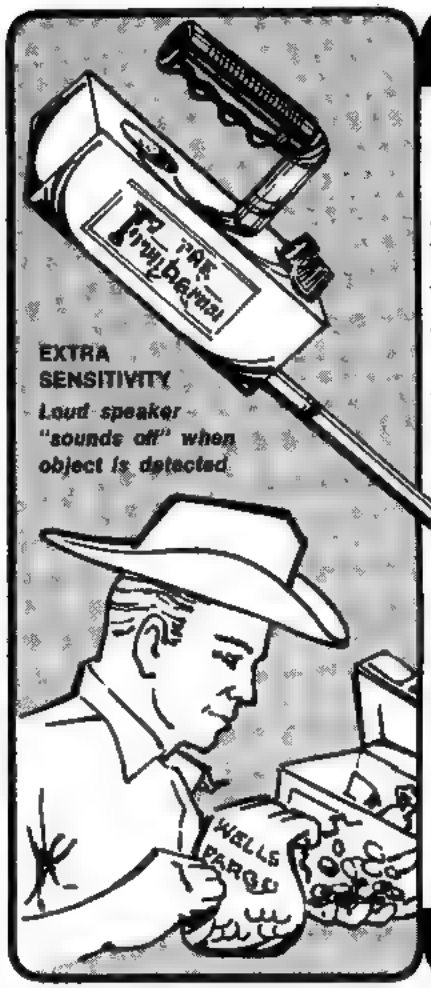
"If they set fire to the restaurant," Blake broke in, "it will burn up the whole block—and you own half of the buildings yourself!"

That reminder made the difference. Quickly López called out an order, and gradually the preparations for burning ceased. But there was a lot of grumbling in the mob. Blake knew that the sheriff's order would not hold them back from some kind of assault for very long.

Telephones were scarce, but Blake's office had one. So did Judge Smith's residence in New Town. The call got through, and Blake got his information over the wire in a hurry.

"Use my name to persuade López to hold the mob as long as possible, Blake," the judge said. "Don't let Clay start shooting either if he doesn't have to. I've got a detachment of troops on the way over there. The mob won't resist U.S. soldiers—I hope!"

Troops? Now Blake remembered that because of a nationwide strike there was a company of U.S. Infantry guarding



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the railroad yards on the far side of New Town.

One of the mob had just shattered the restaurant window with a brick and Billy Green was starting out of the kitchen to make a fight of it, when the two squads of soldiers got there. A leader of the mob, an Old Town deputy, waved a paper under the nose of the young lieutenant in command.

"This a legal warrant for the arrest of the criminal, Billy Green!" he shouted. "You got no rights to interfere with—"

"Tend to him, Shorty!" the lieutenant nodded to a chunky corporal.

With no more ceremony, the butt of Shorty's rifle socked the protester under the chin—and that was that. In the face of rifles with fixed bayonets, the mob hastily dispersed. In less time than it would take a magician to say hiddledy-piddledy-maximus-mush, Bridge Street was empty except for Blake, the soldiers and Tom Clay with his posse just emerging from under the bridge.

Billy Green surrendered to the lieutenant and was held under military guard that night. Rightly or wrongly, Judge Smith took charge of the hearing the next day, and dismissed the charges.

FOR A TIME Billy Green walked warily, with a six-gun at his hip, but nobody bothered him. Old-timers say that from that day on, masked gangsterism began a slow but steady decline in San Miguel County. Today the old "hanging bridge" has been replaced by a concrete span hardly adapted for hanging. Bridge Street is still picturesque, with many of the same old buildings, but far safer for man, woman or child to walk at night than many another street in the U.S.A.

Later in the year of the ruckus on Bridge Street, Billy Green moved to Trinidad, Colorado. There he was called upon to lead a lawful posse on a manhunt on the Purgatoire (Picketwire) River. Evidently the posse was ambushed, for none of the five members ever returned. Billy Green's brothers and friends searched in vain for many months. Finally, in a huge ash heap they found charred human bones and a spur identified as belonging to Billy Green. People who knew him have no doubt that the young cowboy from Las Vegas went down fighting.

Held Prisoner by Grizzlies!

(Continued from page 21)

free of smoke, a cooking fire was built outside. The pair had brought along provisions for two months and they still had another month to go. For fresh meat they depended on O'Malley's Henry rifle. Two days before he had shot a yearling doe and now he strung up the carcass and built under it a hardwood fire to cure it.

DURING the latter part of the night there was a disturbance outside and O'Malley got up to see what was going on. He barely had his head out when he heard the cloppety-clop of the mule's shoes through shale rock. Esther, named after Timberlake's last wife, had just then taken off.

He looked around for the cause of the trouble but saw nothing. The only thing he could hear, other than the distant sound of Esther making her way rapidly down the canyon, was a hoot-owl.

"I warned you," Timberlake said when told of Esther's rapid departure. "There's a grizzly b'ar around."

"Wasn't any grizzly. Maybe a coyote or a wolf."

At daybreak O'Malley got up to see if Esther had returned. "Oh, my achin' bunions!" he exclaimed. "Take a look, Jess. We got company."

On the opposite side of the creek, in front of the other cave, three grizzlies were having a merry time stripping the meat from the deer carcass O'Malley had strung up to cure. It had been pulled down and carried across the stream sometime early that morning. The three bears appeared to be a mother and two cubs, though it is considered rare for a female grizzly to have more than one cub. One of the cubs, about half grown, was slightly larger than the other and could have been adopted, which sometimes occurs when cubs are left motherless. In any event, there they were, stealing meat that was badly needed by the prospectors.

Enraged by their act, O'Malley seized the Henry and fired three times at the female grizzly. The reason he quit firing was explained by the metallic click of the rifle's hammer.

"Damn it to hell!" he exploded. "I forgot to refill the magazine after I shot that deer. Where are those cartridges? A whole box of 'em. What did I do with 'em?" He was searching through his gear frantically.

During the search for the missing linen cartridges made especially for the Henry rifle, O'Malley had neglected to check on the grizzlies. Suddenly Timberlake screamed, "Look out, she's coming in!"

The female grizzly had thrust her head through the narrow slit that was the doorway to the cave but could not get her shoulders and forearms through. She lunged her powerful frame against the door as if to shove her way in, but the barricade was too solid. Nothing gave.

O'Malley seized the rifle and ran a foot of the muzzle down her throat, forcing her to back off. Still unsatisfied, she scraped the boulders with her massive paws and tried to dislodge them. Concern about her cubs finally drew her back to the other cave where she sat making deep threatening noises in her throat. Eventually she drove the cubs inside the cave and after surveying the surroundings went in herself. It was plain enough to the prospectors by now that they had moved in across from a family of grizzlies.

WILD-LIFE EXPERTS say that the grizzlies of one hundred years ago, as well as the mountain lion, were less afraid of man than they later became. Perhaps it was this lack of fear which caused the three bears to remain in the cave rather than clear out at the first

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sign of hostilities. If the female grizzly had been seriously injured by the Henry's slugs, she certainly was not showing it. On the other hand, she was displaying every sign of revenge by keeping a constant eye on the cave the prospectors occupied, ready to charge on a moment's notice.

The Henry rifle, although it held in its magazine more cartridges than any other firearm at the time and could be fired more rapidly, certainly was no weapon with which to go up against a grizzly. It had been tried and discarded by the Army. It was inaccurate and carried too light a load for man or beast. Its only redeeming feature was its rapid-fire mechanism. The prospectors knew this and Timberlake took his partner to task for having been so hasty. "Now that you've wounded that critter she's going to be meaner than hell."

"I'd flatten her if I had that box of ammunition. I'd put enough lead into her to sink a battleship."

"And what are we going to do for fresh meat? No ammunition, no meat. That old she-bitch isn't going to let you out of her sight, mark my word."

"I'm going back for the ammunition, that's what I'm going to do. I'll sneak off in the morning when she's still in the cave. I can make it there and back in a day."

"Like hell you can! It's thirty miles there and back and you know how rough the country is."

O'Malley was convinced he had left the box of cartridges on a rock near where he had killed the deer, but he didn't go for the ammunition. They had plenty of provisions to last a month and could hold out until the patience of the bears wore off.

The grizzlies were still hanging around their cave as darkness approached, the young ones splashing along the creek in search of frogs and other tidbits. O'Malley, having gathered some wood earlier in the day, went outside to build a fire over which to prepare their supper. He had been there but a few minutes when Timberlake screamed, "Here she comes!"

O'Malley made it, barely. He later prepared supper inside the cave and they had to put up with the acrid smoke which almost suffocated them.

The next morning the bears were gone and the gold hunters hoped they had seen the last of them. But no such luck. Back they came in mid-afternoon to sit and stare at the interlopers across the way, just as unfriendly neighbors sometimes do of an evening when hot weather drives them out-of-doors.

The problem of cooking meals outside the cave, gathering wood and carrying in water a pailful at a time, was eventually solved by doing these things in the morning when the bears were away feeding. The men could have slipped away but Timberlake was in no condition for travel.

O'Malley hadn't gone far for wood at the beginning, but as the days wore on the wood close to the cave became scarce and he had to go farther afield. On these occasions he was watchful for any movement in the brush, but in spite of these precautions it finally happened. Above the cave occupied by the prospectors was a rocky and brushy hillside. O'Malley was just below it, about fifty yards from the cave when he heard the brush popping as something moved with the speed of a runaway freight.

O'MALLEY broke for the cave but was a little late in getting started. The mother bear nailed him just outside and really worked him over. He lay still as if dead. When she was through with her job, O'Malley was unconscious and had a broken arm. He also had lacerations on his right hip and there were toothmarks in his jaw and shoulder. He regained consciousness sometime during the forepart of the night and managed to crawl into the cave where he would be safe from another attack, should the grizzly discover that he was still alive.

Timberlake, unable to move his legs, did what he could for O'Malley but it wasn't much. He tore up a spare shirt and bound the bleeding wounds; he could do nothing for the broken arm, however, for there was nothing to do with.

That night the two partners lay side by side and talked about dying. O'Malley said that if he died and went to heaven, he hoped there would be no grizzlies lurking behind the Pearly Gates, for if there were, he would turn right around and go to hell instead.

"If I ever get well enough to walk again," Timberlake said, "I'm coming

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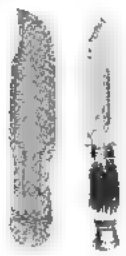

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SEE SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT OFFER ON PAGE 45.

back here and hunt me a mess of grizzly meat."

For four days neither partner could move far enough from his bed to put on a pot of coffee, and since there was no wood for a fire, he couldn't have boiled it anyway. O'Malley had bound up his arm after a fashion by cutting up a canvas haversack in which he carried his goldpan. Timberlake had been keeping track of the time they had been there and O'Malley was surprised to learn that it was seventeen days.

When O'Malley's hip was strong enough to sustain his weight, he began making trips to the creek for water while the bears were away feeding. He also managed to drag in enough wood for cooking. But he was more careful now and left the cave only after watching the grizzlies start off on their daily trip into the woods for food. He was especially wary of that blind spot above camp, where the female had outfoxed him by hiding and waiting for him to make an appearance.

Why were the bears lingering so long? The old one, possibly still feeling her wounds, was evidently making the cave their temporary home.

After twenty-three days, living in misery and want, the prospectors found their grub supply dangerously low. Without vension to help out they had drawn more heavily upon their supplies than ever before.

"We've got to do something," O'Malley said on the twenty-seventh day of their imprisonment. "If you can stay here alone for three or four days, I'm sure I can make it to that stage station at Canyon Creek and get help."

Timberlake agreed. After getting in a supply of wood and water, O'Malley bound his injured arm to his body, so that with the other he could ward off the thick brush he was sure to encounter. He carried with him only a few matches and his hunting knife.

It was fifteen miles to Canyon Creek, and rough going all the way. He had no intentions of trying to make it in one day. He figured that if he kept going throughout the daylight hours he could be there by noon of the following day.

He was about three miles from camp when he stopped to rest a minute and looked back. He saw some movement through the brush, but it was too indistinct at that distance to identify whatever it was. Probably a deer.

He went on after a few minutes, maintaining an easterly direction that would bring him out of the mountains somewhere along Canyon Creek where he was certain to find a few prospectors and sluice miners.

A mile or so beyond where he first pulled up, O'Malley halted once more and inadvertently looked back. This time there was no mistake. He saw the old female grizzly and her two cubs emerge from a patch of brush and cross a little opening. A few minutes ago he had crossed that very same spot. They were on his trail!

As a general rule, grizzlies haven't the keen scent necessary to track a man, yet there are dozens of known instances where they have followed a man's trail. In a few cases, they have been known to scent a human a mile off.

O'Malley said in his account that he next saw the grizzlies only a quarter of a mile behind him. He decided to climb a tree, something no heavy grizzly can do, unless it is a large tree with many limbs. The one O'Malley chose was a black oak, about as big around as his body—then he happened to remember that climbing trees required two hands and he had but one.

It is said that man sometimes uses his brain to better advantage when all the chips are down, and if ever O'Malley had all his chips down it was now. He ripped off his sweaty jacket and tossed it down at the foot of the tree. Then he proceeded with as much speed as possible to get the hell out of there.

From the next ridge he looked back again and saw all three grizzlies ripping up his jacket. He watched until they apparently satisfied their lust for his scent and turned back, having accomplished their mission. From there on the prospector didn't hurry quite so much.

Unknown to O'Malley of course, there were certain developments back at the cave which would eventually give him great joy. Timberlake, flat on his back on the cave floor and wishing that he were dead instead of only half dead, happened to spot something green under the edge of one of the boulders forming the cave barricade. He managed to pull himself over to where he could reach it. It proved to be the rain jacket O'Malley had worn the day they arrived there.

A sudden thought struck Timberlake. Might it be possible that the missing box of Henry rifle ammunition was in a pocket of that jacket? It was. The jacket had been completely hidden from view when the frantic search for the missing ammo was made; it had been available all the time had O'Malley possessed a better memory.

The next morning as the bears were leaving their cave to hunt for their breakfast, Timberlake took a bead on the old one's massive chest and pumped all fifteen slugs the Henry held into her hide. When he finished, the old lady lay on her side, blood flowing from her mouth and nostrils. She never again moved.

At the sound of the shots the cubs fled, but they made the mistake of coming back later in the day to find Timberlake waiting for them. All told, Timberlake fired twenty-three shots and there were three less grizzlies in the Rockies.

Thirty-one days after Timberlake and O'Malley moved into the cave, Timberlake was rescued by a party of six sent back by O'Malley. Timberlake partially recovered, according to O'Malley, and got a job as timekeeper at a mine in Butte, but had to walk on crutches the rest of his life.

After writing his account of their experiences, O'Malley fades from the picture, but he left behind him information about grizzlies that the U. S. Wild Life Service found very useful in compiling its history of *Ursus Horribilis of the Western Mountains of North America.*

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

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LINDERMAN'S RECOLLECTIONS

Montana Adventure, the Recollections of Frank B. Linderman (University of Nebraska Press, $5.95), edited by Harold G. Merriam is the second posthumous book about Linderman. Merriam also edited *Recollections of Charley Russell* by Linderman who wrote more than a dozen books—Indian tales, legends, novels, verse and biographies of prominent Indians. Linderman (1869-1938) reached the Flathead Lake country of Western Montana in 1885 at the age of sixteen—fresh out of Chicago. His six years as trapper and hunter were prime schooling for his writings. In essence, *Montana Adventure* is an autobiography of Linderman and contains a bibliography of his writings in the appendix.

RANCH TO FARMS

Littlefield's Lands (University of Texas Press, $5.00) is by David B. Gracy II, archivist of the Southwest Collection of Texas Tech at Lubbock. The author came by his interest in the Littlefield colonization enterprise quite naturally—his grandfather was Littlefield's sales manager (and incidentally his nephew by marriage). Major George W. Littlefield was a Terry's Texas Ranger during the Civil War and a farmer, rancher and banker after it. He bought the Yellow House Division of the XIT in 1901, and in 1912 opened about a fourth of 312,000 acres to ranch settlement. The general manager of the Littlefield Lands Co. was a cowman (and another nephew of Littlefield), James Phelps White, one-time manager of the LIT and a partner in the Littlefield Cattle Co. This book is about the colonization of a particular ranch on the South Plains but will serve well as an example of the evolution of town building and the growth of farming in a vast empire of grassland. There is a good selection of photos, a list of purchasers, a bibliography and an index.

PINEY WOODS FEUDS

Gunsmoke in the Redlands (The Naylor Co., $5.95) by Joseph F. Combs tells of the turbulent last half of the nineteenth century in the East Texas piney woods. Times were rough throughout the country following the Civil War. Violence followed first waves of humanity as they moved west, but usually subsided as communities sprang up and law and order were established. In East Texas violence erupted between families long established in the region and even enveloped whole communities. Local people took the law into their own hands and hired gunmen rode the countryside. Even the famed Texas Rangers met with little success against the reign of terror. Joe Combs, well known agricultural leader and writer of East Texas, was perhaps prepared better than anyone to write of the country he knew so well. He lived through the latter part of the bloody era and has seen peace and tranquility return to the Texas forestland.

WESTERN RAILROADER

Thomas Fitzpatrick, Railroadman (Boulder Publishing Co., $1.95) by Forest Crossen is Volume VI of Western Yesterdays. Fitzpatrick began his railroading career in Kansas in 1868, on the Kansas Pacific. He became a friend of Bill Cody who was the buffalo hunter to furnish meat for the grading crews. Hardships ranged from Indian fights to blizzards to droughts. From the plains railroads, Fitzpatrick moved to the narrow gauge lines of the mining booms in Colorado and became division roadmaster on the Denver and Rio Grande. Crossen personally interviewed Fitzpatrick for first-hand accounts of many of the chapters. Photographs and end maps add to this fitting addition to "Western Yesterdays."

SPANISH OUTPOST

San Juan Bautista, Gateway to Spanish Texas (University of Texas, $8.50) by Robert S. Weddle chronicles the little-known mission established at the present site of Guerrero in the Mexican State of Coahuila, thirty-five miles south of Eagle Pass, Texas. San Juan Bautista was the northernmost outpost on the frontier of New Spain after the East Texas missions were closed in 1693. Until 1755 when Laredo was established many expeditions left San Juan Bautista to explore the upper country and to establish missions, including a mission settlement on the San Antonio River. Even later many expeditions passed through the historic mission—including Santa Anna's army on the way to the Alamo in 1836. Little sign remains today of the old mission, but Mr. Weddle's diligent research and pleasing narrative have produced an informative account which has re-established San Juan Bautista in the history of the Southwest. An extensive bibliography, selected photos, and an index enhance the book.

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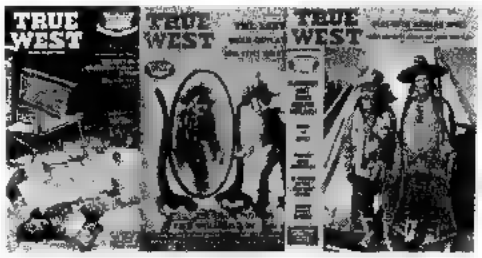

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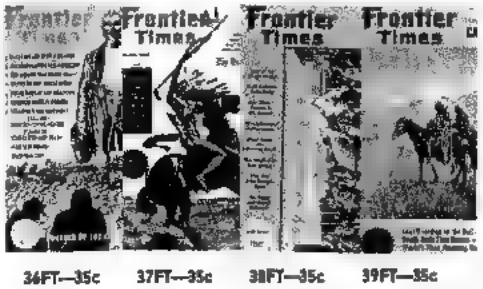

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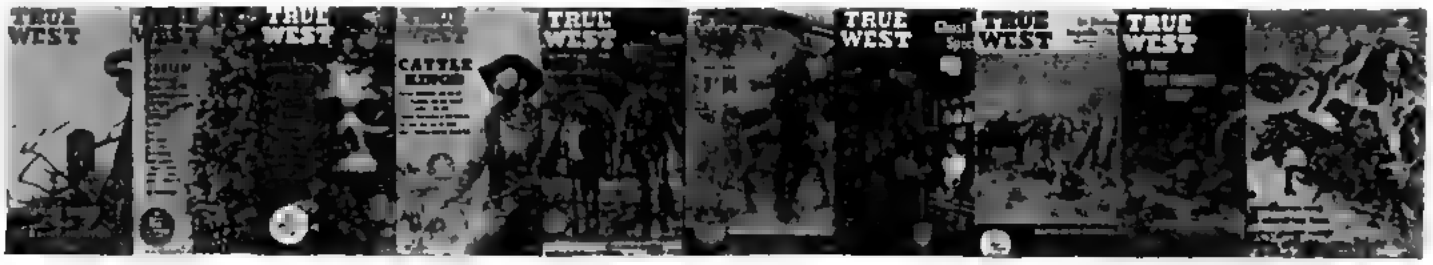

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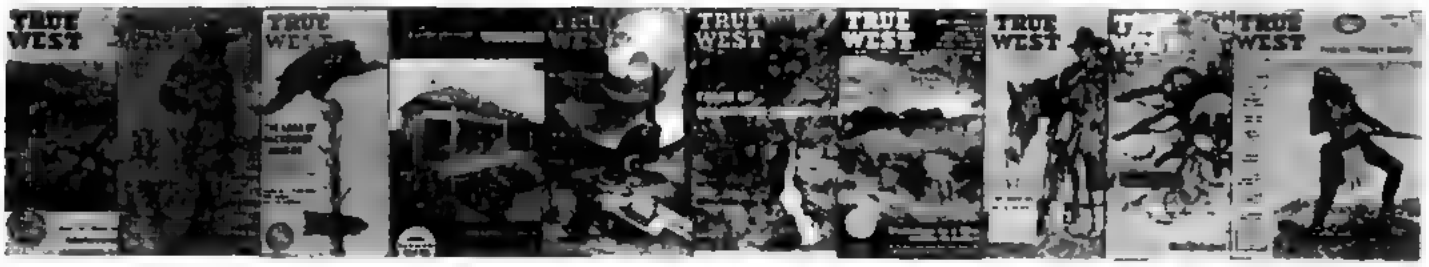

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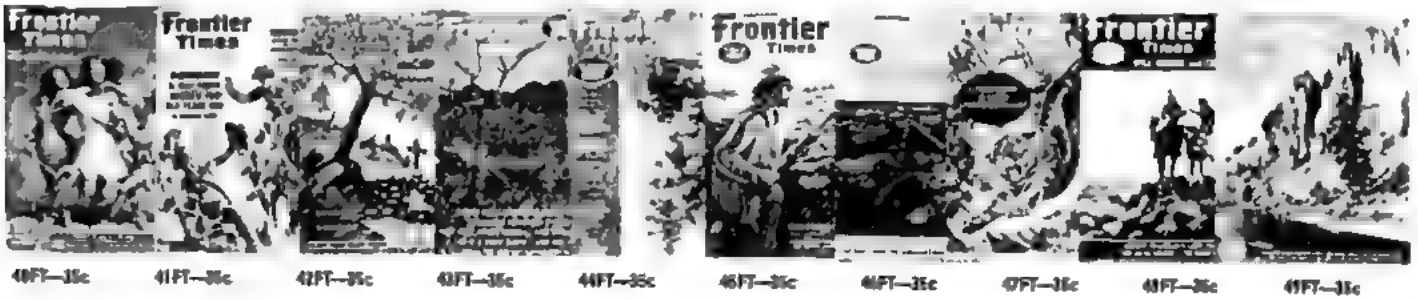

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The Fabled French-Indian Chris Colombe

(Continued from page 25)

build their tracks across his land. The town of Colome, South Dakota was started and Colombe sold the townsite. The lots brought fabulous prices. Speculation was rife.

Chris built a beautiful home overlooking the town. Here he entertained lavishly. His horses and automobiles were the talk of the country. Chris' son, Theodore, then a small boy, carried a checkbook with his father's signature on the checks, and he bought anything and everything.

Yet with all this display of wealth, Colombe never forgot his old friends. His wife, Aunt Emma as she was known to all of the young people of Colome, might be entertaining in their parlor, while Chris would be hosting a group of old cowboys and Indians in the bunkhouse. Here, with a gallon of whiskey and plenty of steaks to eat, they laughed, gambled and played practical jokes on each other.

Chris Colombe has become a legend in the Rosebud country. To some he was a high roller on the green gaming tables. Others remember his first fights. The people of Colome still tell of the lynching party who gathered one night to hang an Indian boy accused of attacking a white girl. They milled in the street, then started to the jail, carrying a long rope. Just then Chris Colombe came around the corner a block away. He gave the blood-curdling war cry of his mother's people and cut loose on the drunken crowd with two six-shooters. The lynching bee turned into a foot race. Although no official time was taken, it is said that the speed with which most of the mob left the scene was never again equaled in the Rosebud. In court the girl admitted she had lied and that the Indian was innocent.

Chris Colombe was once driving a new Cadillac automobile—wide open. As he approached Rosebud Creek near the Agency he saw a tiny Indian child sitting in the middle of the bridge. Colombe whipped his car off the trail. It went over a twenty-five-foot embankment and submerged. Laughing, Chris walked from the stream, leaving the car to the fish. He went to Valentine, Nebraska and purchased a new one.

When he told Aunt Emma about the accident, she smiled and said, "I am glad you didn't run over someone's child just to protect an old automobile."

Chris Colombe died in 1935. The crowd at the funeral overflowed the Catholic Church, and people stood in the streets. It was raining. The great crowd stood in silence. They had come from all over—Indians, cowboys, pale-faced gamblers, and businessmen.

Pat London, the nationally known auctioneer from Colome, came out of the church. Chris Colombe and he had been life-long friends. London looked stunned, his face ashen grey. He walked mechanically. A high school boy sobbed by the church steps, and the rain and tears blended on his face. An old couple came down the steps. They were one of the homestead families from the early days on the Rosebud. They were crying. Perhaps they remembered the hard days when Chris Colombe's generosity had meant much to people in distress.

Chris Colombe was truly a cavalier of the old frontier. Whatever *his* new range would be like, *ours* on the Rosebud would never be the same without him.

Treasure Hunter With Know-how

(Continued from page 38)

out veins of copper—and now and then a bat or two.

We saw lots of wild country that day on a trip of about 100 miles through canyons, around mesas and across high plains. A few miles out of Kenton on the return journey Ike pulled the van to a stop near a dry wash, hopped out and said, "There are some dinosaur tracks in a rock down there." He scrambled down a steep bank and trotted away in his cowboy boots, nimble and easy. We've never seen Ike in anything but Western garb. To my way of thinking, any other clothing wouldn't look right on him.

WHO, other than Ike, would ever have thought of digging in this Black Mesa country for treasure indicated on a map which was thought to pertain to loot buried by the Hole in the Wall Gang somewhere in far-off Wyoming?

One day Ike, Lida Mae, Donna and Janet were out on a drive. Nearing the vicinity of the Dutch oven find they decided to have a picnic lunch at Ike's scene of triumph. While his body was "taking it easy" Ike's eyes and thoughts were on the alert as usual. He noticed three hills not far from the old house where he had discovered the Dutch oven loot.

In his wallet was a scrap of paper on which he had once copied a drawing of a "treasure map" from a magazine. Although the magazine article was about treasure buried in Wyoming, Ike had put his copy of the map in his wallet to have for future reference "just *in case*" he might be in that state sometime.

As he studied the three hills he recalled that the three hills designated on the map showed a marked similarity to those at which he was looking. He took the map from his wallet and saw that the old railroad bed nearby matched pretty closely one shown on the map. Ike's bird dog instincts took over. The map showed four trees. Here were *three*, but they corresponded to three of those in the drawing. This was enough for Ike. He got his metal locator, took readings on the three trees, located the approximate place a fourth tree once might have been, and put his locator to work.

It sang out. Ike dropped the gadget and grabbed his little shovel. His daughters' eyes were glued to the spot where Ike was tossing out dirt like a badger. When he reached down and came up with a crockery jar the gals were speechless; when he began to pour out silver dollars they shrieked and began counting.

Ike's wife was in the car reading a

magazine while the big discovery was in progress. She had heard the wild yell but figured the girls were just having some sort of fun.

Donna and Janet replaced the dollars in the jar and carried it upslope to the car and began pouring dollars into their mother's lap. She was momentarily stupefied—but not for long. She too had to count every one of the 200 dollars and was just as astounded as her daughters. Ike stood there grinning, saying nothing but plenty happy over hitting paydirt the second time under such far-out circumstances.

The Osteens decided to spend the night there since it was getting late. Janet and Donna didn't want to take a chance on losing the loot to some chance hijacker, so they buried it in a new location and dug it up the next morning just before leaving for Springfield!

Ike has done a lot of speculating about the finding of buried treasure at two locations so close together. He has come to the conclusion that since there once was a railroad near the old house there may have been a train robbery and that some of the money was placed in the Dutch oven and buried in the house for use from time to time in purchasing supplies, and that the loot in the jar was buried at a safer location away from the house.

IN THE TREASURE STORY I wrote which led to our getting acquainted with the Osteens, there was one thing of special interest to Ike—my mention of a shallow cave with a Spanish Treasure map pricked into its walls. It is located somewhere north of the Cimarron, as best I can remember, in one of the maze of canyons fingering out from Black Mesa into the Cimarron breaks.

The day the cave was found I was riding in a pickup with some ranchers of the area and I'm not at all sure just where we went. I don't know where the ranchers are now. I tried to locate one of the men and his wife not too long ago but they had moved and I wasn't able to find them during the time spent in the area on that trip. The other man and his wife live out from Springfield somewhere. Ike intends to try to find them and see if they can direct him to the cave.

There are a great number of canyons in the Black Mesa country and a lot of mesas and other landmarks—many of them much alike. Though the country as a whole is almost devoid of trees except for those along streams, and scattering junipers and similar growth on the slopes, it's easy for a stranger to get lost in the breaks.

I hope Ike finds that cave with the map some day. He said to me, "If you could only remember a little more about the country where you saw that cave so I'd have something to go on, I might find it."

I only wish I could, Ike—I only wish I could! Even a sharp treasure hunter like Ike needs a better lead in so vast a country. But the map is there somewhere! My wife and I, along with four others, *saw it.* *(Continued on next page)*

$ TREASURE HUNTING $

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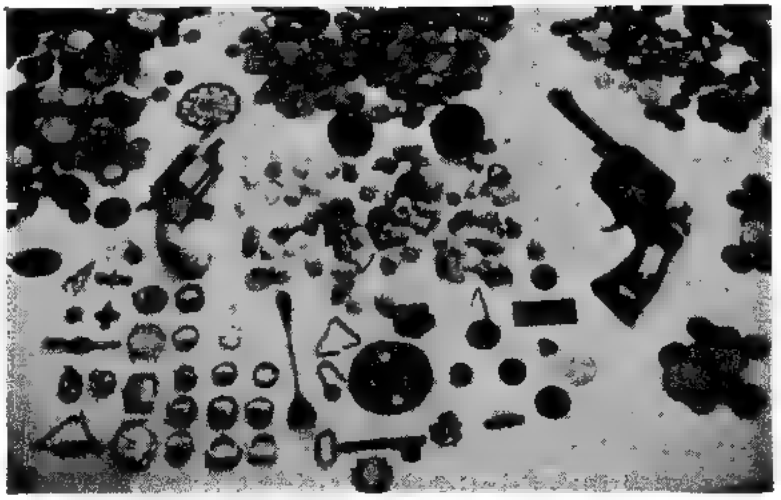

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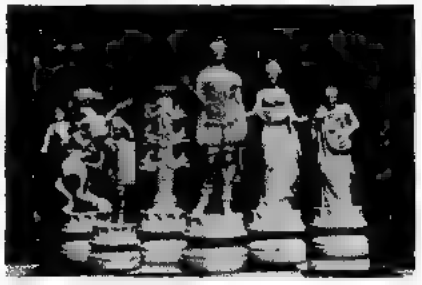

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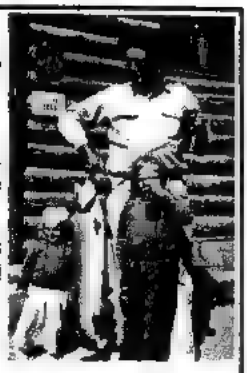

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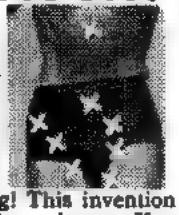

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One time while at Kenton, my wife and I went to old Fort Nichols, near the southwest corner of Oklahoma's Panhandle where it joins New Mexico and the Panhandle of Texas. The ruins of the fort are in Oklahoma, about three miles from the New Mexico line. The fort commanded a good view of the surrounding country. Southward, maybe a short quarter-mile, are deep ruts of the Santa Fe Cut-off. To the west is a long stretch of rolling plains where caravans snaked their way to and from Santa Fe. Not far off a big canyon gashes the prairie, loops around the north end of the fort, and swings south along the east side of the fortification. This would seem to have been the real danger zone from enemy attack when wagons rolled on the historic Trail. The fort was built as a protection for the caravans.

About thirty or forty paces downslope from the east wall of the fort, between it and this canyon are a number of tumbled-down rock huts—small, one-room structures which we guessed were either sentry posts or officers quarters. The uneven line of rock ruins parallels this side of the fort its entire length—about 100 paces. The remains of a few of these ruins are along the north side, and two or three at the south end. Paralleling the west side is what could have been an earthworks—our surmise after studying the layout for some time.

When I say "wall of the fort"—it is really what had *been* a wall. We have heard that settlers had a hand in "dewalling" Fort Nichols and using the rocks for farm buildings. About all that's left of the main fort are the lower, or foundation, stones. At a corner of one of the huts on the east side was a freshly dug hole which had been refilled.

When I was telling Ike of our visit, I mentioned the hole as looking like "some treasure hunter had been there."

Ike smiled and said, "Yeah—I dug it —but didn't come up with anything." As stated before, he sure gets around, and it will be no surprise if I get a letter from him sometime telling us he has located the Spanish treasure map in the small cave out somewhere in the shadow of Black Mesa. And it won't be too much of a surprise if we should hear that he decoded it and found some loot matching, maybe surpassing, the two batches of old silver dollars. Each time we talked about that particular cave Ike got that glint in his eyes. He's not likely to bypass it because of most meager information.

IN THE RAMBLES my wife and I have taken during some thirty-five years, mainly in the West and Southwest, we have been in a lot of back country. This is due to sketching and story-hunting jaunts. On many of these trips we have found choice spots where a metal locator would have been of real service. Since they have been on the market we have never owned one because the thing would be sure to usurp too much of what we don't seem to have enough of now—*time*.

But knowing Ike as I do, if he ever will go with me to my old stompin' grounds in the sage-splotched sandhills around Old Fort Supply in western Oklahoma, or come over to our sometimes-home in the eastern part of the state, there's little doubt that his nose can be pointed to where that metal locator might sing grand opera. A strong hunch says there are riches waiting to be unearthed in the area where we have found so many old treasure symbols, and Ike has the know-how to read the symbols right and there's no doubt that he has the stubbornness to follow them to buried loot.

IN JUNE, 1967, when heading toward Estes Park in Colorado, we parked our trailer by the Osteens' house in Springfield and had a visit with Ike, his mother, Lida Mae, and Janet.

The day after our arrival Ike and Lida Mae took us on a tour of the area south of town—over plains and hills into canyon-scarred country where few people live—primarily rangeland. I noticed that although Ike drove as if he were in a big hurry to cover a lot of miles in little time so as to "show us around" as much as possible during our short stay, he was always careful when cattle showed up near the road and always slowed down till they were left behind. Most folks living in ranch country do this. It's a good rule for all motorists to observe.

We stopped at a location where a town had flourished in pioneer days. Old foundation stones and remains of rock buildings bear mute testimony to the activity of a frontier mining town which overlooked a spring-fed stream.

Ike and Lida Mae were talking about five "cowboy graves." On the brow of a low hill we looked for them. Some rocks, now in disarray, bore some semblance of having been used as grave markers. We decided to do some digging around the ruins of the town. There wasn't time to stay long in one place. Our efforts accounted for several square nails, bits of stove iron, broken glass, tin cans, a few empty cartridges and a lot of small, round metal objects.

Today's tourists, picnickers and others have added to the labor of treasure hunters. Jaunts we have been on with the Osteens and others have shown us that much of the digging is due to metal locators singing out as they near what prove to be mighty aggravating things—bottle caps! They're *everywhere*.

Who doesn't like to prowl ghost towns or similar places? And a lot of people doing so carry refreshments along. Ike believes, "There should be a law against throwing bottle caps away. They just add to our woes." After being on the handle end of a shovel on only a few digging sprees, I'll go along with him on this.

We traveled down and up more canyons, draws and gullies. At one place, almost hidden by brush back from the trail, were the remains of two old wagons—derelicts of "horse 'n buggy *(and wagon)* days." Farther on, some abandoned ranch buildings were visited. The Osteens have ferreted out many such. These were built of rocks—one a half-dugout type. The metal locator got action there, but no

results. Scattered about were some shriveled cowboy boots, both men's and women's; a mummified horse collar and pieces of harness in like condition; a mail order catalogue and tattered magazines.

On a recent pleasure trip in Colorado —this time not a treasure hunting trek— Ike got in a conversation with some old-timers. Naturally, the talk soon turned to buried treasure. From that confab Ike got a lead on something that might turn out big—if he takes it on.

Sometimes folks from other states contact Ike to deal him in on buried treasure they claim to know about. He has been on a few such hunts and is planning more. He wasn't pressed as to results of those he was on. Like any true Westerner, Ike doesn't talk a lot. What he does say, you listen to and that's it.

He did tell us about a wonderful plan he hopes to carry out "someday." He wants to start at Independence, Missouri —eastern terminus of the Old Santa Fe Trail, and follow its course to Santa Fe, New Mexico—taking the Cut-Off route through the Cimarron breaks where so many robberies were staged on caravans. It is generally believed that much loot—especially gold bullion—was buried along this route when attacks from outlaws and Indians were imminent.

How I would like to go with him when that "someday" arrives; *not* for a cut of the loot found, but just to watch this guy birddogging the Old Trail for valuables.

I believe I have kept every letter Ike has written me and it seems this portion of one should be quoted here. It gives some of the reasons why he is such a good person to know: "I am rich in the wealth of good fellowship I enjoy with the people I come in contact with, and I find something in the sunsets and sunrises and the things of nature that money just can't buy, nor can hard times or depressions ever take them away from me.—Ike."

Editor's Note: A story by Mr. Osteen will be carried in the next TRUE WEST —the February issue which will arrive at your newsstands just before Christmas. In fact that whole issue is going to be like a double visit from Santa Claus!

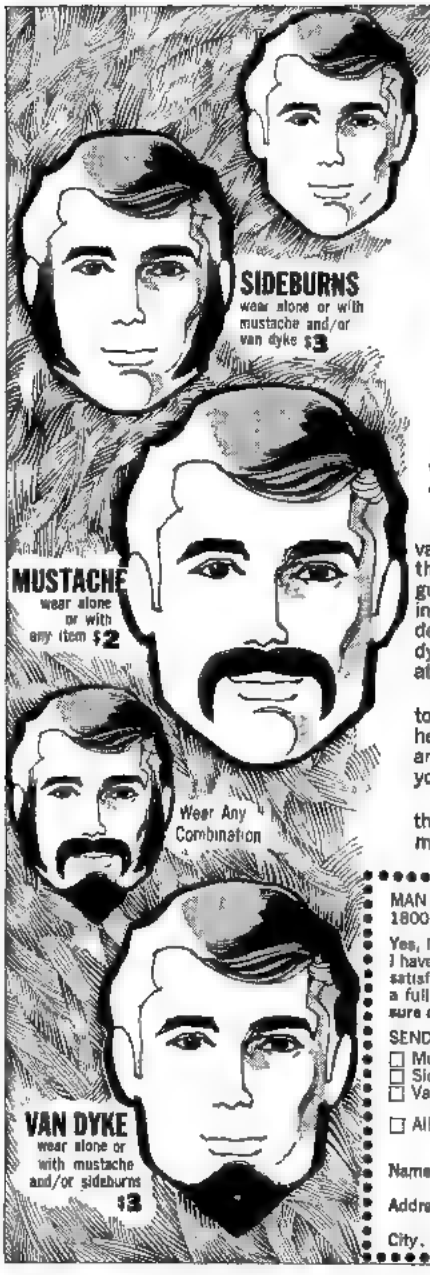
"Blood Flint" and Gold

(Continued from page 59)

him into a rag man on the spot.

The next morning we were having an early breakfast when we heard the familiar clatter of Hugo's pick-up on the ridge. Soon he pulled up. Willie and Dedrick were with him. They were smiling and Hugo ambled over to the coffeepot as if nothing had happened. I thought that I would wait the man out for a little while, yet I had no intention of letting him finish the cup of coffee he nursed between his hands, before we had this thing out. I waited.

Willie and Dedrick took their coffee and moved over to watch the kids scrapping the dog with bits of bread and bacon rind. Hugo sat his cup down carefully, rolled a cigarette, and began to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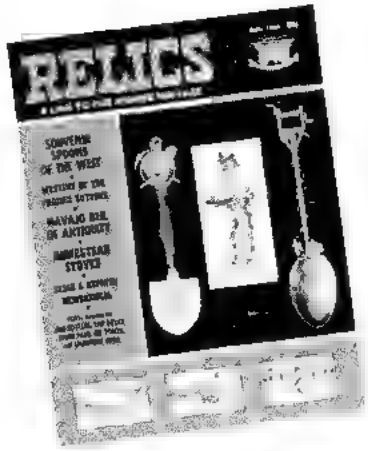

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talk. He said that he guessed that he had made a mistake working on this place as he had been warned against it, adding hastily that it had nothing to do with me or my owning the place. I gave him a short nod but my face probably betrayed my impatience and lack of understanding.

He said that he did not expect me to believe him but he would tell me anyway. He looked somewhat sheepish, and smiled seemingly at himself, as he told me that he had been after the gold which was buried on the bluff above the spring and below the cave! He had me cold as I had no knowledge of any gold, and this he must have known all along. I laughed, part in relief and part in genuine mirth at the idea of gold.

Hugo smiled and laughed some too. He talked now without the tension which had marked the first few minutes of the meeting. The story of the buried gold rolled out without hesitation and in detail as though the treasure had been buried just last week or something.

HUGO told me that during the period just before the Civil War this part of the county was being settled by people from the Old Country who were buying farmland from men who had tracts granted for service during the days of the Republic. He said that these immigrants banded together, spoke the old language and dealt in coin—gold coin. They did not trust paper money nor many other settlers.

Numerous families were coming in from the Gulf Coast and spreading deeper into the western counties where land was cheaper. The particular family in this story had come to the community from Sweden and had in their possession $20,000 in gold coin to purchase acreage for several families, all closely related, who had traveled with them. The money was in the keeping of this family because by some means it had been selected as leader of the group. This family consisted of a man, his young wife, and two small daughters.

The group of immigrants had traveled directly from the coast to this community and were staying with friends already established in the area. The newcomers were most anxious to buy land and start to work as they had arrived in midsummer and needed to establish themselves as quickly as possible. Their anxiety about buying quickly was their undoing for it seems they let it be common knowledge that they had gold aplenty for purchasing farms, preferably those with some improvements and especially those planted in corn.

Many people came forward with offers to sell, but only a few had improved land with standing crops. Then four men presented themselves to the leader and treasurer stating that they had just the land the group could use, with improvements and also crops in good condition. They stated that they were moving on west with their families and wanted to leave right away. Since they appeared travel worn and it was late in the day, they were made welcome for the night. The talk of land went on during the evening meal and one of the four men proceeded to lay out a rough map of the neighborhood some twenty miles away. They described the place in detail, offering to guide and house the land buyers while they inspected the holdings.

All went well during the evening and it seemed that a deal would surely be made. The matter of price was discussed and affable assurances were exchanged. The leader of the Swedes showed a handful of the gold pieces to the four men in a gesture designed either to impress them with his ability to pay or perhaps in hopes he could trade more advantageously backed by the hard glittering brilliance of gold! The four men were apparently gladdened by the sight but were careful not to ask about the rest of the carelessly advertized money.

THE NEXT MORNING the group of land buyers clambered into a wagon fitted with board seats and drawn by a stout team to accompany the four men back to their community. Six men were in the wagon with the leader including the settler who had been housing the immigrants. He was a successful and elderly farmer and had been asked to assist in the job of appraising the new land.

The party left in high spirits and followed the four men who were surprisingly well mounted for farmers. The good mounts, however, had not been questioned nor explained.

At their nooning the four men showed considerable concern about unshod pony tracks they had seen as they rode ahead and flanking the farm wagon. In the afternoon they approached an abandoned cabin and did so with great care. Looking to their weapons, they insisted that the party wait with the wagon at a safe distance. They returned satisfied that the cabin was safe and asked that the party remain there while two of them rode on ahead to see if Indians were about. The remaining two men played their roles very well showing great concern about their families and cursing the Comanches with much feeling. Naturally, the wagon party was alarmed and anxiously checked their arms while they considered an immediate retreat to protect their own people. A shot was heard ahead from the direction taken by the two outriders. The two remaining men mounted and instructed the farmers to remain at the cabin and fort up as best they could, stating they would hurry to the assistance of their friends.

The wagon-bound farmers did as instructed and the time passed. It took a while for this group to come to the decision to retrace their steps. The next morning they arrived back to find the house burned over the bodies of the old woman and two little girls. The mother, though slashed and mortally wounded, had somehow managed to crawl from the burning building clad in her night dress. It was her cries which greeted the Swedes on their return. She gasped out the identity of the murderers as the same four men and told how they had gained entry. She was cared for as conditions permitted but died the following morning in the

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Photo shows the start of work on the Thomas ranch house, Little Round Top, Williamson County, Texas.

arms of her husband. Sometime during the night these same four men had reappeared at the old farmer's home with the purpose of killing the entire family and making it appear the work of Indians. They got the gold, stuffed the coin sacks into saddle bags, and rode away leaving the house and out-buildings ablaze.

MEN GATHERED as news spread and the yard was filled with well mounted and heavily armed friends whose determination was welded by the pitiable sight the ashes and smoldering timbers did not hide.

Tracking was not relied on entirely in this instance. Bands fanned out, each led by one of the men from the ill-fated inspection tour. The murderers had evidently relied on the hard rocky ground to make tracking slow and had circled from south to west and then north from the scene of their monstrous crime. They were surprised late in the evening of the same day along a creek where they were resting their horses by a group of settlers led by none other than the grieving and frantic father of the slain immigrant family. Whatever he lacked in good sense about business, he did not lack in courage as he raced ahead and directly upon the murderous crew. He was armed with a shotgun and his close first blast almost beheaded one of the men. The second charge caught another in the leg as he mounted, and the coursing lead killed his horse. This last shot was fired as the Swede himself was falling from the saddle with a gaping wound squarely in the chest. His companions were not so rash but their volley did wound one of the remaining murderers as they whipped their tired animals into a wild run along the creek.

The group stopped just long enough to dispatch the wounded man pinned beneath his dead horse, then dashed on in hot pursuit until they were met by two rifle reports. One immigrant lost his horse. There was an exchange of shots but this group of betrayed men were not to be denied. They managed to circle the two fugitives, but darkness had fallen and each man was left to his own devices—both the hunter and the hunted. No more shots were fired for fear of revealing position.

Dawn found the situation unchanged except that another band of possemen had located the bodies from the first fighting and had moved up the creek following the tracks. With these reinforcements, the fight lasted for almost two hours as the settlers moved from boulder to boulder, closing in on all sides. The last fugitive tried to surrender and stood up, only to be shot to pieces. His confederate had been killed during the first hour of fighting that morning.

The men of the posse began to gather the bodies and belongings of the men whom they had slain in justice and revenge. The one remaining horse was tied in a thicket above a spring and the saddle bags were still in place. Unfortunately, they were empty except for clothing and food remnants. The gold was gone.

TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS in gold coin comes to some weight and bulk and had been in four sacks when taken from the home, according to the old man who had hosted the doomed family. The money was never found although the path of the murderers was retraced from the scene of the crime to the place of their death.

Hugo related this story in such detail and with such authority that I began to question him on how he could know all this. He replied that his great-grandfather had been with the posse. My spring had been the site of the last desperate stand and he believed that the gold was in some manner hidden during the night before the final fight. Hugo wanted to hunt for the gold, this I understood, and I went along with his story except for one point which kept him from winning my confidence—the blood flint.

I hit Hugo squarely with this question as his eyes searched mine for reaction to his gold tale. He looked down at his

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feet. His tone was calm and matter-of-fact as he explained that the blood flint had been his sign to stay away from the gold. He went on to tell me that he wanted the gold, yet feared hunting it because he believed it was guarded by the spirit of the young Swedish wife who had been killed for it.

This was a little rich for me but I wanted to find out more about the flint rocks. He did not know of any scientific reason for the formation and would only repeat that it was a sign put there for him.

Be all this as it may, I had butchered for a period of some five years and had seen plenty of blood. The stuff that squashed out of that rock was identical. I have searched good libraries and talked considerable about rocks and have not found one shred of evidence to solve the mystery of "Dat damn bloody rock! Der death sign!"—the blood flint.

Accounts of buried gold come often as campfire yarns but never before had I had the feeling of "closeness" to truth that I had through this startling series of events. I found myself looking over toward the spring on the opposite side of the creek even as Hugo waited for my gaze and read my interest—an interest gold seems to generate in most men. He pointed to the existing spring and shook his head saying that the spring he meant was the one which was on the near side of the creek and no longer flowed. It had stopped flowing after a previous owner had dynamited the cave because he had lost stock in it. The explosion required to close its more than sixteen-foot opening had caused that spring to stop flowing even though the cave was located a good hundred yards farther up the hill from the creek and bluff.

The old spring had been located on the bluff in a natural fortress, an area of heavy overgrowth, boulders, and crevices. It was some twenty-five feet above the creek bed and about fifteen feet below the brow of the bluff. This entire bluff was and is subject to flood. It has been washed and changed many times.

The appropriateness of this spot as a place to make a final fighting stand, and Hugo's thorough knowledge of the general area gave the situation enough realism for me to give him permission to search for the gold. He insisted that he would share his find on a fifty-fifty basis but I must give him a reasonable time to work before telling anyone else. A year seemed adequate.

Hugo has had full access to this place for more than a year. He has not reported finding the cache of gold coins. Yet he pokes around the old spring after each heavy rise on the creek which assures me that he is steadfast in his belief that the gold is really there and will be laid bare and gleaming among the drifts and silt along that rugged bluff on the very next rise! I believe that Hugo hopes it will happen just this way so that he will never have to dig too hard or too deep because of the warning—the blood flint, the death sign.

Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 29)

big beavers. They immediately set to work gnawing down the tree from four sides. One of the rescuers had a .22 rifle that broke up the siege.

"While coyotes were never so fierce as the great timber wolves of the North, the animal has always been noted for its sagacity and genius for cooperation. I was not a member of the rescue party. I have never studied folklore and never expect to.—Your friend, Jim Dan Hill."

THE GRAY WOLF OF THE BADLANDS

By Scott L. Smith

THE GRAY WOLVES had their dens in the rough badlands of Montana and the Dakotas. A full-grown wolf weighed from eighty to one hundred pounds. Old-timers claimed a wolf weighed twenty pounds for every inch of his footpad. The gray wolf would kill anything, even full-grown horses. However, their favorite dish was tender young colt.

When they struck a band of sheep they could do great damage, killing as many as a hundred head in just a few minutes. The grays were very smart and could detect a rider with a rifle a long way. I know this to be a fact, as I have ridden within rifle range many times when I was unarmed.

Stockmen would pay a professional trapper $50.00 for each wolf, plus board and room, but the trappers had very poor luck. The wolves were too smart to poison; and as they did not range very far from the badland breaks, very few were ever caught with dogs. The wolves always lit out for the protection of the rough country, and as the dogs ran on sight only, they had no chance. Wolves continued to increase in number, and the killing of sheep and cattle was not curtailed to any extent.

I remember one of my own experiences with these villains of the badlands of North Dakota. In 1899, when I was only seventeen years old, I went west to become a cowboy, traveling "first-class freight." I arrived in Dickinson, North Dakota, in the early spring and got a job as a cowpoke. The ranch was located ten miles from Medora on the Little Missouri River. Teddy Roosevelt's ranch was about twenty miles farther north. Our summer range was twenty-five miles east of the winter ranch in open country, and our camp was about five miles from the badland breaks.

The ranch owners also owned a band of 3,000 sheep which they leased out. I was sent over to assist during lambing season. After the lambing, the herder in charge was fired because he would not listen to reason, and the band was turned over to me—just for a short time, I thought. As it developed, I was in complete charge from May until September.

From the very beginning, the wolves were a problem and made it necessary to corral the sheep every night. I had a horse and rifle, but the wolves were too wary to allow me within rifle range. One day, I had left my horse and gun

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at the camp and followed the band until they started to feed.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning when suddenly I saw two gray wolves coming toward the band from the other side. They looked snow-white with the sun shining on them. The flock stampeded, and in nothing flat they were bunched all around me. The wise old grays must have known I had no gun, as they charged into the band and started wholesale slaughter. They were running all around me as close as fifty feet, but paid no attention to me at all. After they had killed and wounded about fifty head, they started eating on a freshly killed carcass.

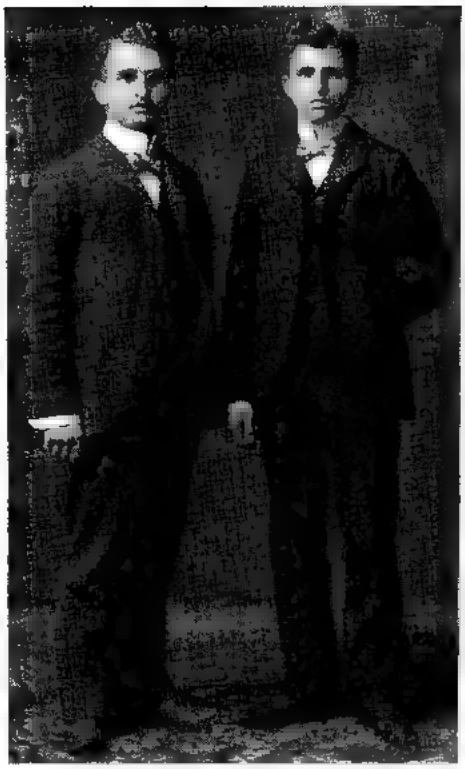
I picked up some rocks and started toward them. My scheme was to bash in their heads with those heavy rocks. I was within a few feet of them when both wolves stepped over the lamb they were eating and started toward me with blood dripping from their wide-open mouths. I could look right down their throats, and I am sure my heart was in mine. I slowly backed away, holding onto my rocks like grim death. I expected the wolves to attack at any moment and felt the rocks might give me a small measure of protection. After I was a short distance away, the grays returned to their kill.

These same wolves returned almost every day; but as I had a gun, they did not stage another attack. They made several attempts to raid the corral at night, but the dogs always gave the alarm. As they only attempted their raids on dark nights, I was unable to see them, but I would fire the gun in the direction of the noise. They were not easily frightened, however, and continued to return on every dark night.

ABOUT A WEEK after the wolf raid on the sheep, the owners drove out to look over the band. There were four of them, and they drove out in a two-seated Concord wagon. About fifty head of sheep had been killed, quite a financial loss. I was sure that they would think I had turned the sheep out to range and had stayed in camp. I started to explain to them about the attack. I pointed to a hill a quarter of a mile away and told them that I first saw the wolves coming over that hill. As I was telling them this, the two big grays showed up on the hill like they had been summoned as witnesses for the defense. I never thought I would actually enjoy seeing them again, but those two mean fellows saved my neck. Their appearance at just that time and place convinced my employers that I had told them the truth.

Some of the injured sheep lived several days. The news got around, and some of the Russian land "squatters" came over and slaughtered them for the meat. The idea of eating any of that mutton certainly did not appeal to me.

After I had finished with the herding, I was returned to the cattle ranch. Following the fall roundup in October, we moved the stock back to the winter ranch. This was when the wolves really got to work on our cattle. They would average



Scott L. Smith, age 18, and his brother Ray, 1899.

at least one beef a day and always the fat two-year-olds. They had a way of hamstringing the animal, rendering him helpless; then they would eat only the liver and lungs while the carcass was warm. A pack of six or more coyotes would usually finish the remains of the kill.

We tried making drags; that is, taking a quarter of beef and dragging it along the wolves' regular trails and setting traps. Regardless of how carefully we set the traps, the wily old grays could detect the human scent. I was fortunate to get a few coyotes and two eagles.

In the rough country where the wolves are operating, the wolf trapper while setting his traps is being watched from all directions by the old matured wolves, and if he would look around he might see wolves peeking over a knoll. I have back-tracked after setting traps and found fresh wolf tracks over mine.

The wolves were still slaughtering the beef when I left on a hunting trip down the Little Missouri River.

EARLY POOR FARMS

THE CARE of the destitute was a serious problem in early Nebraska. Many of the settlers of those days came to the territory for their health and when they arrived were unable to undergo the labor necessary to establish a farm. Many when they arrived were so ill they needed financial aid. The death rate among these health seekers was high, and then the widow and children needed support. In some cases the older children were old enough to earn a pittance doing chores, herding cattle or hoeing corn. The county commissioners sometimes allowed the widow with small children $5.00 a month and paid for the burial of the paupers who had died. In the 1860s the counties were collecting more taxes and spent more money to take care of the poor than they had been able to do in the 1850s.

The counties decided that there was a more economical way to care for paupers. The first poor farm in Nebraska was probably a Douglas County farm near Omaha which consisted of 170 acres and was purchased from H. Z. Chapman in 1859 for $6,000. About 1885 when Douglas County decided to build a county hospital, fifty acres on the east side of the farm were sold for over $330,000.

From time to time other eastern counties established poor farms. That of Otoe County was located near Dunbar and seems to have been operated so that it more than paid expenses. Some of those cared for were slightly demented, some were seriously ill and some had at one time been prominent locally but had been ruined by their appetite for liquor. Those who were able helped on the farm. For instance one man took the cattle to pasture and stayed with them all day; one raised the tobacco for the residents; one or more cared for their gardens.

Cass County bought a poor farm in 1871; Lancaster County bought one in 1872. It was located about a mile and a half northwest of Lincoln and in 1930 had about a dozen residents. Saunders County bought a farm in 1877. It was located a mile and a half north of Wahoo and consisted of 320 acres. The Thayer County poor farm in 1882 was raising good crops and was paying expenses. Dodge County bought its poor farm before 1880 and rented it by advertising for bids.

Poor farms are now a thing of the past. The state in 1933 passed an old-age pension law which was amended into an old-age assistance law. Many employers granted old-age pensions or retirement pay. In 1935 Congress passed the Social Security Act which for all intents and purposes made the poor farm obsolete.—Courtesy Nebraska Historical Society.

The Love of Six-toed Pete

(Continued from page 15)

"Mrs. Carson," I says to her, "I will eat that pie the minute your back is turned!"

Well, pretty soon Kitty had to go down to the root cellar for something, so I walked up to the pastry cupboard and took down that pie, and got me a fork from the drawer and went outside behind the smokehouse. I set there in the shade and took my time eating that pie, enjoying every bite.

When I was through I hid the pie tin and the fork in the smoke shed and walked back slow to the kitchen. Six-Toed Pete was there, along with Kitty and Mrs. Carson. I come in like a cat that had finished off the cream, which I had.

Mrs. Carson says, "I'll bet that Red is the guilty one."

The pastry cupboard was open, so I knowed how the land laid. "Sure I am." I says. "You betcher life. That's me. I'll swipe every pie I can get my hands on.

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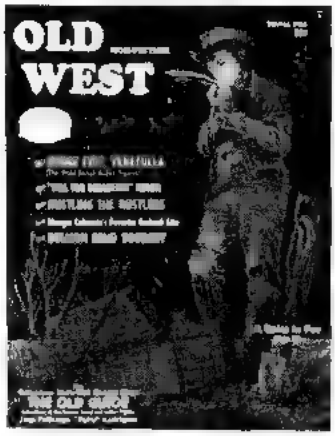

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I just now finished eating it."

"He didn't either," Kitty says. "It was Pete that took it."

Pete just looked at her and didn't say nothing.

Mrs. Carson says, "Red, you took that pie, didn't you?"

"I just told you I did. How many times do I have to tell you?"

"See, he didn't," Kitty says. "It was Pete."

"Um, um, awk," Pete grunted, and he did look guilty as all get out.

"I guess you're right," Mrs. Carson says.

"You listen to me," Kitty faced Pete and her cheeks was lit up like a bonfire, "you get out of this kitchen and you stay out. If you ever come round here again, you clodhopper, I'll take a mop to you. Now you get out and stay out!"

Pete just stood there hang-dog and all very embarrassed and maybe not able to move a step. I don't know. Such bashful boys kinda puzzle me.

Kitty stamped her foot. "I just can't stand you! Those six toes! I don't ever want to see you again!"

"Cut 'em off," Pete says.

"What?"

"Cut 'em off. Show you."

He set down and pulled off one boot. He pulled off a sock. He took his toad jabber out of his pocket, opened the blade, and run his finger along it to test it, and then he bends down and gets aholt of that smallest extra toe and brings the knife down toward it.

Until then none of us had any idea what he was about. I think he really meant it. I think if we'd a-stood there and not done nothing, he'd have cut off the extra toes to please Kitty. But she let out a warwhoop that could be heard clear down to the pond and charged out of there, and I jumped and got hold of Pete's hand with the toad jabber.

There wasn't another word ever spoke about that vinegar pie.

I NEVER PROVED much of a hand at handling a yoke of bulls. They was a special knack to it and a bull had to get used to a man in addition but then he'd do anything for him. Six-Toed Pete could just touch 'em with a goad stick and talk to 'em and they'd gee or haw or back up or do anything he told them to.

We had about five yoke at the Carson Brothers' mill to bring down logs. Pete and young Carson handled two of the yoke. Old man Carson could turn his hand to most anything that must be done, but mostly he was a sawyer there at the mill. He liked oxen better'n horses, though I never much could see it that way. Seemed old-fashioned to me. A bull can't do more'n pull his own weight because all he does is lean into the bolt from straight legs, while a horse will bow his legs and get some muscle into the pull. Yet you had to give them about the same care as horses.

Carson would buy up farm bulls after they was done for breeding purposes and have the boys break them to yoke, and the boy that broke them had to drive them afterward because they wouldn't do much for anybody else. They had to be kept shod like horses and was fed grain the same as horses. You curried a horse, but you carded a bull, because a bull never sweats on the job like a horse, almost none at all. But when you get them in the barn they stand and pour out sweat, so you wait and card them the next morning when they're cooled out.

I tried once to handle Pete's team and had no luck with it and didn't try again. I got mixed up putting on the yoke. You have to lay the yoke on top of their necks, and they'd keep moving around restive before I could get the bow underneath their necks and fasten the pins on. It's very simple how this yoke works—both pieces fasten together around the necks of the pair of oxen and are held together with pins. From the middle of this runs the chain, fastened to whatever you are hauling. Logging with them with all their work on the front against the yoke, bulls would become very stout in shoulders, neck, and forelegs.

Finally I got the yoke on that team and started to drive them, using the goad stick. But they didn't drive well a-tall for me, and finally the Holstein on the left sulled on me—laid down and wouldn't get up no matter how much I worked him over with the goad. That was enough bull driving for me.

We had arranged the fight between Washington and Jeffries for Saturday on the road down about a quarter mile from the mill and out of sight of it. We picked Saturday because that give us time to put back up the fences that was always ripped down. Them days mostly they was worm fences—that is, rails laid criss-cross without any nails. Them bulls get to tearing around, they'd rip down the fences on each side for maybe a quarter mile along the road. First bull to quit and light out across the pasture over the broken fence, other bull was the winner.

Washington was a half longhorn type, cross between a longhorn and some other breed. Jeffries was a Durham.

Late Saturday, but with the sun still up, the boys turned out to the last man, still making bets, and here come Six-Toed Pete leading Washington by the ring in his nose and took position in the middle of the road. The boys was lined up on the inside of the fences on both sides of the road. And now along comes Al Carson looking mad and goading his Durham. They got the bulls set face to face and then they both clumb over the fence to watch the fireworks.

Mostly our bulls was pretty peaceful inclined because there was no lady concerned. They pastured together without bothering one another much. So now Washington and Jeffries look one another over pretty close, don't find nothing wrong, and turn away to graze the grass along the side of the road. We pitched some clods at them and done some yelling and Pete and Al clumb back over the fence and used their goad sticks to get them mad, and what with all the yelling and goading, the bulls perked up with the excitement and measured one another

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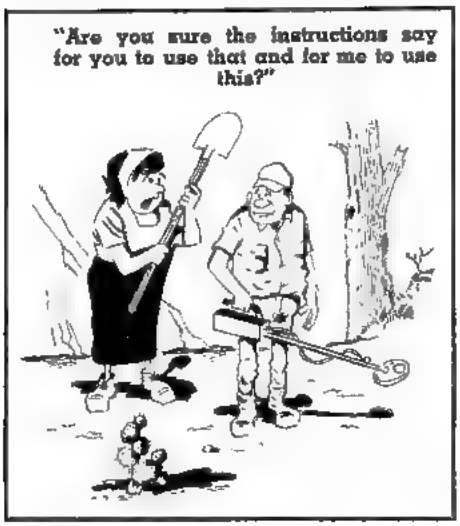
once more with a different notion in mind.

THEY begin slow at first, feeling one another out. It'd been raining for two days and the footing in the road was bad, with maybe four, six inches of mud, so they slop around and get their heads together and lock horns. That's the way bulls fight. They don't haul off and charge one another like most people think. They stand together that way and push, and maybe kneel and even roll, with their heads working and working, trying to work around with their horns to the other critter's neck and shoulders. I've seen 'em work that way for half an hour or longer till they wore all the hide off their foreheads, before one or the other broke through with his horns.

It's the muscles in the shoulders and forelegs that counts, which is why our bulls always had the advantage over the farm bulls, but because both these was logging bulls they was very evenly matched. They didn't make any sound—just worked and worked that way awhile, till finally Jeffries broke and hooked a gash into Washington's shoulder. That put the ginger into Washington and thereafter the going was much heavier. You could hear them panting and see how they was straining, and Washington come through with a slash in Jeffries' neck. In the mud they kept sliding and falling. They'd pick theirselves up and go at it again.

Of course, you figure that just by my way of telling this that Washington is going to win, like it would be in a movie. You never can tell about those things. It didn't look like for any reason at all, unless it was that he got bored—he was getting the best of it at the time—Washington took off lickety split down the road toward the mill and his pasture. Maybe he was just getting hungry, I wouldn't know.

That ended the fight, and there went my five dollars tearing off down the road. And of course that meant that Carson would have clear sailing with Kitty and no buts about it. We boys begin to put the fence back up, not so bad tore up this time as usual—ours was gentlemen bulls—and there Pete and Al was in the middle of the road slugging it out.



We hadn't heard no words nor nothing. They just went at it like it had been planned that way. Maybe it was the bulls done it. Both boys was mighty fond of their oxen and didn't like to see them tore up, and I know Six-Toed Pete could've never been drawed into a fight unless it was sort of defending his bull's honor. He couldn't stand to see Washington licked, maybe.

Well, we let them go at it and crowded round to watch. Mostly we was a peaceful lot—the little kids fought at school, of course, just like everywhere else and then as well as now and fifty years from now. But the growed-up boys didn't have much occasion to fight.

Six-Toed Pete was getting the worst of it, too. They slugged a few times, and then they was wrestling around, and pretty soon there was Albert on top of Pete, pushing Pete's face down into the six inches of mud, and I was thinking maybe it was about time the rest of us took a hand, afore Pete strangled, when a wildcat clawed right through a bunch of us and jumped onto Al Carson's back with her arms around his neck.

Kitty drug him off Pete and slapped his face, while he just gawked at her. And then she got Six-Toed Pete up onto his feet and slapped his face, then took him by the ear and led him off down the road toward the mill.

"By God," Al said. "By God!"

We didn't say anything for awhile. Finally I said, "That shows you how fair women are, boys. Here Al's bull won the fight; then Al here won the fight, but she don't abide by no such results."

Chum says, "You give Pete the wrong advice, Reno. Bashful does it. It's the ladies that handle the gents like they was oxen."

Not long after that, Six-Toed Pete and Kitty Loomis was married. I never heard whether Pete amputated off his toe or not, but I guess not. I guess Kitty just got used to them. The marriage happened after I'd left the mill.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 40)

Wars of Texas by Mildred Mayhall, page 7).

When I was a child, I remember hearing my grandmother tell about a cousin of hers by the name of Dudley (whether this was his first or last name, I cannot remember) who went off out west along about this time and got himself killed. She mentioned something about Palo Duro Canyon in connection with his death. Could the above mentioned Dudley be the one I am looking for?

My grandmother was Margaret Ann Blackburn, born 1853 in Grayson County, Texas, a daughter of Sam Blackburn. She had one sister, Alice, sometimes called "Nan," and two brothers, Ed and Bill. She married James Allen Upchurch in 1879 and they lived around Detroit, Texas, until about 1905 when they moved into Indian Territory. Any information at all will be appreciated.—Mrs. F. N. Standfier, 1634 Barcelona Road SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87105

Click or Cleek Family

My great-grandmother, Lucinda Cleek Van Nice, was born between 1830 and 1839 in Kentucky or Virginia and married Peter Van Nice in Johnson County, Indiana, December 23, 1858. Her husband was killed in 1863, and some time between 1866 and 1900 she moved to Missouri where she died in St. Clair County about 1904. She is believed to be the daughter of Matthias Click, born in 1802 in Virginia, and Elizabeth, born in 1797 in North Carolina.

Census records of Mercer County, Kentucky, (1840), show that Matthias had a large family, mainly daughters, but only the names Artamisa, John, and possibly Lucinda are known. Artamisa married Abraham J. Van Nuys in 1849 and Matthias married Ellen Powell in 1859 in Mercer County, Kentucky, but no more is known of this family. Information is wanted on the Click and Cleek families and their ancestors.—L. J. Van Nice, 1330 Eighth Street, Manhattan Beach, California 90266

Law Family

My father-in-law and his wife lived in Deer Lodge, Montana, at the time the story, "He Lost His Youth in Deer Lodge" (February, 1968, TRUE WEST) took place. According to my husband, his parents were the only family to have a house—everyone else lived in tents. But I know very little else about them. Would any readers know about Mancel ("Manc") Law and his wife, Mary Grace Lewis? I can remember Grace saying her aunt ran a rooming house in Deer Lodge.

My family, too, was named Law. My father, Joseph Aaron Law, was born in Cambridge County, Ohio, in 1863. He married Kate Coffin in 1885 and they had three children, Charles, Bessie, and Tom (my half-brothers). Tom died when I was fourteen. Charles married and had a son called Tod but I lost track of them when my father died. Can anyone tell me about either of these Law families?—Mrs. Dorothy C. Law, 143 Venado Way, San Jose, California 95123

Montgomery

I need information about my great-grandfather Montgomery of Scottish descent. He died a month or two before my grandfather was born. His family came from Virginia and settled in or near Montgomery, West Virginia. I am told he was killed in the Mt. Carlion mine. Does anyone know where this mine is located? My great-grandmother later married Ben Williams and had three children, Steve, Ruth, and Liza Williams. My grandfather is Robert R. Montgomery, born 1881, Kanawha County, West Virginia, died 1933, Mt. Hope, West Virginia, and buried at Cirtsville, West Virginia. Could someone see if there is a marker and get the dates for me? He also lived in Pax and Long Branch before settling in Mt. Hope. I would like also information on the families of Vernons, McCormacks (McCormick), McCalls, and Havners of West Virginia.—Robert C. Montgomery, 2507 East 26th Street, Muncie, Indiana, 47302

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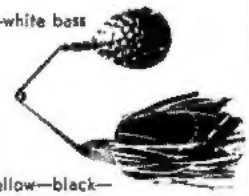

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Truly Western

(Continued from page 4)

have a picnic with them. Invariably, as soon as the meal was ready, along would come Bob Kenyon on horseback ready to help us eat fried chicken, watermelon and chocolate cake. The boys said he could hear a chicken squawk when they cut off its head on a ranch thirty miles away.—Mrs. A. V. Cheney, Columbia Manor, 6010 S. W. Shattuck Road, Portland, Oregon 97221

Part of the Arsenal

Gentlemen:

After the Bonnie-Clyde story in the June issue of TRUE WEST, I thought your readers might like to know that the "World's Largest Gun Collection" at the Mason Hotel in Claremore, Oklahoma, has a Colt automatic on display with the following inscription:

"This .45 Colt Automatic was found under a mattress in a tourist cabin in Platte City after the gun battle between the Barrows and a Posse of State Police and Sheriffs. This gun was one of 100 guns tested by the F.B.I."—Charles C. Parker, 727 West 11th Street, Freeport, Texas

Old Friends of Cimarron Valley

Dear Editor:

A few days ago a friend gave me the June 1968 issue of TRUE WEST. I was very much surprised to see the story of the tragic drowning of Perry Brite's children, Madge and Merle, the baby, at Point of Rocks in the Cimarron River flood of 1914. Perry Brite was the son of our nearest neighbor when my family settled in old Beaver County (later Cimarron County) in 1894. His wife, Nora Burnett Brite, was one of my teachers at the old ZH School in 1897, several miles above Point of Rocks not far from the Garrett Post Office. I was about nine years old at that time.

The children, Madge, Virgie, and Merle, were first cousins of my sister's children, my sister having married Arch Brite, an older brother of Perry. The Brites were a very large family, fifteen children. They were originally from Mason County, Texas, but settled in the Oklahoma Panhandle along Cold Spring Arroyo in 1886. I lived at Kenton, Oklahoma, at the time of the flood, much of the rain falling in that area both above and below Kenton. I was born in Lincoln County, New Mexico, in 1888, moved with my family to the Oklahoma Panhandle in 1894. My father took squatter's rights, later homesteaded the old Santa Fe Trail campground of Cold Springs south of the Cimarron. I would be most happy to hear from any of the old-timers along the Cimarron Valley from Point of Rocks to Folsom, New Mexico. I now live in western Colorado, but I am a proud descendant of No Man's Land.—Mrs. Annie (Hood) Carter, Box 1275, Rifle, Colorado 81650

Familiar Names

Dear Sir:

I feel that I am part of the West, as I was born on a homestead on Dry Creek north and west of Boise, Idaho. I have lived all but six years of my life in Idaho (four of those six were in the Navy in World War II).

I never felt I knew many great people but in two issues of TRUE WEST you have come up with three men whom I have known, maybe only slightly, but I have known them.

First I met up with Magnus Peterson in Tonopah, Nevada in 1966. He showed my family and me the saddle his wife won and a lot of other relics of bygone days of Nevada.

Second, when I was a small boy on South Second Street in Boise, I knew Frank McCarrol and his wife, Bonnie. Frank was then one of the top bulldoggers of the time. This was about 1924-25. His wife Bonnie was a trick rider in rodeo.

Third comes Tom (Powder Face) Eckerd. He and his friend, I can't remember his name, stopped at our place between Meridian and Nampa, had supper that night, rolled their bed rolls out under a tree and spent the night. They gave my sister and me an old single shot .22 rifle. It might not have been the best rifle, but we thought it was something. They were driving a Dodge of about 1926 vintage, one of those cars we might call a carryall. It had heavy wire screen sides in a body like a delivery truck.

Tom got the name Powder Face from some black powder imbedded in his face.

They were both real nice guys and we two farm kids thought they really rode tall in the saddle. Milt Hinkle's article in December 1967 TRUE WEST is the only mention I have ever seen of these old bulldoggers. But I will say I know they were real men.

I am an avid reader of Idaho history and like to study its geography first hand. I have pulled a pack string over quite a bit of it and want to see some more of it, also take another look at some I have already seen.—Donald A. Tucker, Route 1 Hillcrest Road E., Twin Falls, Idaho 83301

Providence Canyon

Dear Joe:

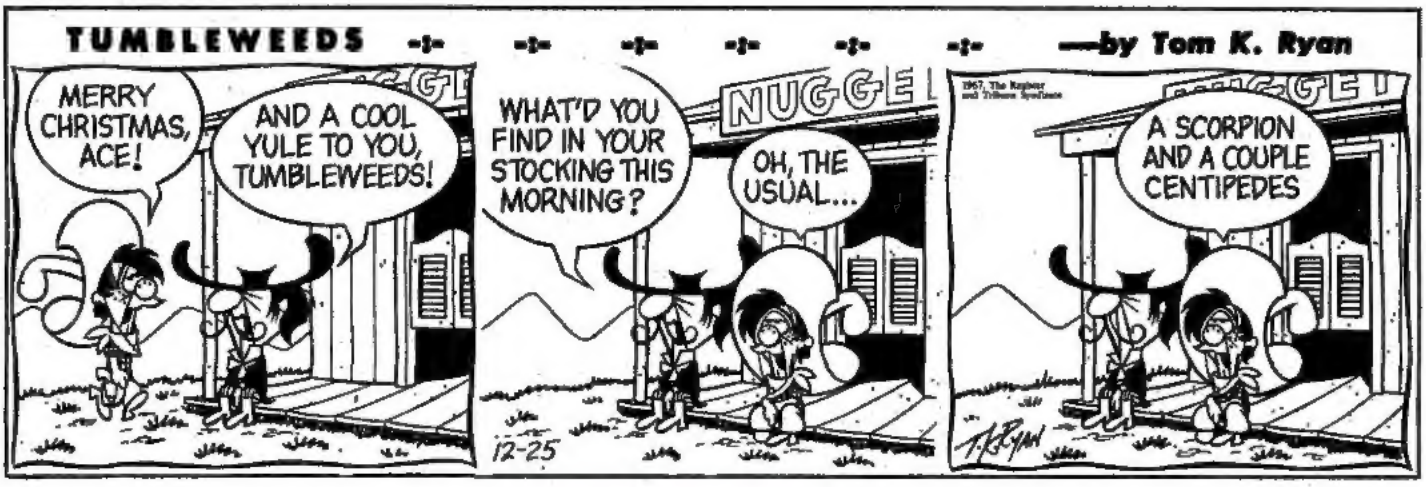
It was back in the 1950s while living in Temple, Texas, that I started reading your TRUE WEST and have been reading it ever since.

Late in the fall of 1933 Dutch Kemurle and I were driving east of Salome, Arizona. About dusk we pulled the old Model "T" Ford off the road over to the right and made camp for the night. The next morning while we were having breakfast we decided to take a hike into the nearby mountains before we broke camp. Several hours later we walked into a wash and to our left were steep rocks, and a long time ago someone had climbed up on a ledge and crudely carved PROVIDENCE CANYON into the side of one of the rocks.

We walked up this wash for about thirty minutes, then turned to the left and started up a draw. We were kicking around in the sand, picking up and looking over interesting pieces of rocks, when I spotted something shiny lying on the sand. I picked it up and it turned out to be a flat gold nugget about the size of a large pea. This was a little exciting so we got down in the sand on our hands and knees and started looking for something yellow. By dark that evening we had seven little nuggets, one about the size and shape of a navy bean.

I owned a small coal mine and Dutch had a little hauling business, so we decided we'd better get up early in the morning and start on the long trip home before we got a good case of gold fever. We decided we would come back the first chance we got and do some prospecting. Well, one thing after another came up, then World War II, and I was inducted into the army. Worse, Dutch died of a heart atack in New Philadelphia, Ohio during the war, and we never did get back to Providence Canyon.

I would be glad to hear from anyone who has been mining or prospecting there.—R. A. Shutt, 426 Elsie Avenue, Holly Hill, Florida 32017



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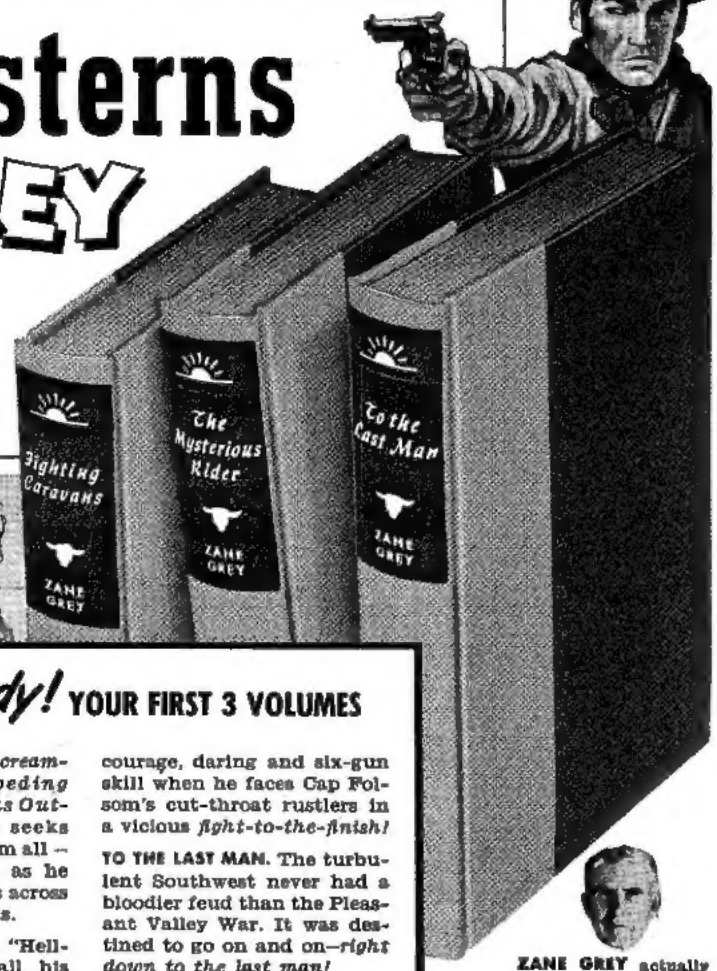

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